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WORLD PLANS, CURRENT FACTS

WHEN the Life Force (Providence or Historical Necessity are alternative terms) decrees that some great change must take place in human affairs, it is surprising how all fingerposts point in the same direction. When President Roosevelt envisages a world organisation after the war, he is only stating in the cautious language of a statesman, distracted by the unavoidable irrelevances of party warfare, what he and every other imaginative man of this generation knows to be the alternative to destruction. The case has been stated a hundred times in a hundred ways; the technical impossibility of preserving the political rivalries of states built on the scale of medieval transport in a period when the world is, in fact, united, however much we dislike it, by the aeroplanes that girdle the earth in days and by wireless which makes news simultaneously the property of Timbuktoo and Saskachewan. H. G. Wells has been trying to make the world see that for the last forty years. Marx, from a different angle, saw it a century ago, and Hitler has made his desperate bid for world domination in the confidence that the old order was finished anyhow and the technical possibilities of unity existed. Argue it as you will, you reach the conclusion that war, famine and revolution are now the alternatives to world organisation; if we waste the opportunity that is before us now, we must go through as many more agonies as are necessary to teach us our lesson.

If there are still some who cannot understand or think in these terms of social evolution, we can put the issue in the simple terms of the immediate future. If we are satisfied with the degree of co-operation now achieved for military purposes and permit the United Nations to split into their component parts after the war, then quite obviously the world will be divided into great blocks jealously guarding their own and more or less consciously preparing for the third world war. In that case an Imperial America, conscious of its new strength, will seek to dominate; a proud Britain, fearing a greater rival, will jealously watch every American advance; a suspicious Soviet Union, finally disillusioned about the hope of co-operation with the Capitalist host, will concentrate on the organisation of power within her frontiers and a renascent China, potentially more powerful than any other national block, will seek to develop her limitless resources without incurring dangerous obligations to those who once exploited her. The alternative is to begin now, during the war when old anomalies like extra-territoriality in China can be brushed aside; while lend-lease proves that states can aid each other on something better than a narrowly profit-making basis; when relief and the future of the backward and devastated areas are under discussion. Now, as President Roosevelt sees, is the time to find a basis of post-war co-operation in world organisation.

Every politician and expert concerned with internal welfare or post-war planning knows that he writes in sand unless a cure is found for international anarchy. Inevitably the official debate on the post-war world opens on the issue of "security." Sir William Jowitt in the House of Commons declared that we must build a system which would secure us against aggression, "whatever the cost." This statement preceded Mr. Wallace's demand for disarmament, Axis and general, within a world economic and political plan. The President has now added that the United Nations must remain united to prevent rearmament in the Axis countries or in any country which seeks to violate the Tenth Commandment. He did not tell us whether he is sure that none of the United Nations would ever offend against the injunction "Thou shalt not covet." Here is at least a recognition of the problem. Behind the scenes there have been discussions on partial regional plans. The Anglo-Russian pact, it should be noticed, looks forward to the inclusion of other states within its twenty-years' guarantee. Discussions about federation in East and Central Europe also proceed with varying degrees of realism. The Poles discuss a federation that would stretch from the Baltic to the Black Sea; its authors categorically state that its intention is to build a barrier to a future German revival, but not, at any point, to challenge or build against Soviet Russia.

The possibility of co-operation after the war depends on our capacity to reach agreement now while the threat of Germany holds us together. Are we so doing? Already an argument seems to be developing about American and British airways. Have we really learnt so little that it is proposed after the war to allow British and American companies to run private and competitive air lines? Or again, looking beyond the immediate and quite unresolved struggle in North Africa, we ask President Roosevelt when he talks of post-war international organisation, whether he is aware of the new blows being struck at the very idea of co-operation. Mr. Eden told the House of Commons only a few weeks ago that no post-war discussions were proceeding with the Soviet Union. We will suppose that he was omitting from the statement present discussions about relief. He had in mind no doubt the failure to attempt any discussion between the United Nations about the future of the Balkans where the hope lies in agrarian revolution and a scheme, such as that favoured by Henry Wallace, that would raise the standard of living of the peasant. America, Britain and the U.S.S.R. could well co-operate in setting up, as Mr. Wallace suggests, a T.V.A. for the Danube Valley. But if Mr. Wallace is to hold out such hopes, the State Department and the Foreign Office must not at the same time tacitly support Horthy and the Magyar landlords; clearly they must begin by a policy of liberation for the Hungarian peasant. How do they feel at this moment about the news of the arrest in Hungary and Bulgaria of hundreds of people whom the Germans call Communists? Do they see in these arrests something beyond the obvious military advantage? Do they also realise that in these countries, as in every occupied country, our firmest friends, if we will accept them as such, are in gaol? They have been slow to see that in North Africa. Again, in Yugoslavia, there are two separate revolts; is there now agreement between the United Nations about our support for Mihailovitch or for the guerilla forces which seem recently to have done most, if not all, the fighting against the Axis? Finally, what of Italy, where political warfare is probably more important than in any other part of the world? German troops do not now occupy Italy. Italians may therefore revolt successfully against Mussolini. Washington, perhaps influenced by the Italian vote in the elections of last November, recognised the formation of an Italian legion of anti-Fascists. We cannot liberate Italy without Italian leadership. What prevents the Allies from issuing formally and openly an appeal to the Italian people? Once there was talk, in Mr. Churchill's phrase, of Mussolini as the "one man" responsible, there was a phase when the Duke of Aosta was regarded as the hopeful liberator. After his death they dallied with the King and the Crown Prince, neither of whom now mean anything to any Italian outside the Social Register. Some still argue about Badoglio. How long will it take America, Britain and the U.S.S.R. to agree that none of these possible Darlans or Quislings can serve our turn, and that, if we mean anything we say, we have sooner or later to fall back on the common people who will prove undoubtedly, when they get the chance, to be anti-Fascist?

These are the two essentials of unity: agreement on economic policy for the immediate future—and agreement on the policy of liberation. Out of these post-war unity of the United Nations could grow.

The Strain on Germany

Another week has passed and again there is nothing cheerful to say about Tunisia. The Germans have by now put about 70,000 men into the tip of this tongue of land. The R.A.F., however, is active, especially round Kairouan. We trust it realises that the great mosque of this town is one of the three or four priceless monuments of early Arabic architecture. The successes of the Russians continue. It seems probable that the enemy is retiring more or less voluntarily from his outposts in the Caucasus, but the Russians are so hot on his heels that he is losing many men and much material in the process. The same thing may be true of his retreat down the Stalingrad-Novorossisk railway. In short, he is falling back all round on Rostov, which he will doubtless defend stubbornly. The curious differences between his steadiness at some points and his feebleness at others may be due to the fact that in all this region of the Eastern Front the troops of the satellite States outnumber the Germans. Millerovo stands firm. At Veliki Luki the enemy has had a partial success and has forced his way back into one segment of its defences. The drastic comb-out of men doing industrial work is evidence of the growing strain on German man-power. The anxiety of the General Staff was obvious in a broadcast by General von Dittmar, perhaps the most objective of the official commentators. He conceded, quoting Clausewitz, that a moment was bound to come when the German offensive must necessarily lose some of its original momentum. At this point the Russians, quite correctly, struck back, but in so doing used up recklessly their reserves of man-power. How much wiser, he reflected, had the Germans been in conserving theirs. He went on to detail the still unused resources on which they could draw—the garrisons of occupied Europe and the factories. His hearers, who know that six million foreigners fill the factories, must have detected his irony. Already boys of sixteen are being used for A.R.P. work.

Trade Union Growth

Trade Union membership in this country rose last year by well over half a million, to a total of just over seven millions. This is still nearly a million and a half less than the total of 1920, when the new recruits were swollen by the return of men from the Armed Forces; but it is nearly double the membership to which the Trade Union movement had fallen in the early 'thirties, under the combined impact of the failure of the General Strike and of the ensuing economic depression. The recent increases are naturally for the most part in the Unions which enrol workers in the metal and engineering trades and in the general Unions, which have enrolled the majority of the less skilled war workers who have joined any Union at all. The membership of seven millions is divided among nearly a thousand separate Unions; but fourteen only of them, with more than 100,000 members each, have between them nearly four million members, while at the other end of the scale there are nearly 300 Unions with fewer than 100 members, and another 267 with fewer than 1,000. Some of the smaller Unions represent skilled trades of importance; but most of them are unimportant local or sectional bodies, which play little effective part in the process of collective bargaining, or indeed anything else. Most of the power of the movement is concentrated in the fourteen giants, *plus* thirty or forty somewhat smaller Unions catering for bodies of skilled workers or for smaller industries. The outstanding feature of Trade Unionism today is the vast membership of the two big "general" Unions—the Transport and General Workers and the General and Municipal Workers. Their growth symbolises the development of production technique, which reduces the proportion of skilled craftsmen in the total labour force (while usually increasing the skill required of those who remain) and adds immensely to the number of dexterous machine-minders who can turn fairly easily from one kind of machine to another. This growing adaptability of labour is, of course, of advantage in the organisation of war production; and it should be also of great advantage after the war, when we shall be called upon to adjust our productive machines to big and lasting changes in the structure both of the world market and of domestic demand.

Agricultural Wages and the Future

The power to fix agricultural wages has now been transferred from the County Wages Committees to the Agricultural Wages Board. Wages will continue to be fixed on a county basis; but the Board will now be in a position to apply a reasonably consistent policy in all parts of the country. This is undoubtedly a step forward, though the change, being made under the Emergency Powers Act, will not survive the war unless it is confirmed by further legislation. It is now generally recognised that post-war policy must be based on raising agricultural wages and conditions to a level comparable with that of urban workers, and that agriculture will have to readjust itself to the changed level of labour costs. The effect of this change, in itself, will, of course, be to encourage both mechanisation and less intensive farming methods. The higher we put our standards for the rural workers, the more subsidy agriculture will need in order to employ any given number of labourers, and the result will be the tendency towards forms of agricultural production which use less labour than other forms. This factor will not operate during the war; for farmers can at present earn by practically any kind of production as much profit as the tax authorities allow them to retain. But it will operate powerfully as soon as the war is over; and the improvement in agricultural wages will then be used as an argument in favour of high agricultural subsidies, above all by those who regard it as an end in itself to keep a large labour force employed on land work. The danger will be that this pressure will be applied in favour of keeping under the plough as much as possible of the land that has been converted under war conditions to the production of cereal crops. Such a policy would, however, be inconsistent both with a satisfactory standard of living in this country and with a reasonable adjustment of international trading relations, especially with the Dominions. There is every reason for giving agriculture the help it really needs in order to put the land of Great Britain to effective use; but it will be necessary to resist strongly claims that this can only be done by the uneconomic production of cereals which it would be much cheaper to buy abroad—and to store, if we need a reserve in this country against possible emergencies. The experience of British food production should be in the sphere of quality foodstuffs, and above all of milk, rather than of the types of crop on which we are compelled to concentrate under war conditions.

The Dual System

The report that Mr. Butler is to introduce in the near future a Bill dealing exclusively with the problem of religious education, or rather of the relations between the religious denominations and the State schools, may or may not be true. We hope it does not foreshadow an attempt to deal with the problem of post-war education piecemeal, by means of a number of separate bills, rather than in a single bill, in the nature of a comprehensive educational charter. The various parts of the educational system are so closely interrelated, and the need is so clear for a reshaping of the system as a whole, that the piecemeal method is clearly inappropriate. It would no doubt be a great relief to Mr. Butler if he could put the religious quarrel safely to sleep, and then go on to formulate his general educational policy free from disturbance by religious controversy; and if an agreed solution of this particular problem were really in sight, there would be much to be said for clearing it out of the way as a preliminary to tackling the real educational issues. But can Mr. Butler hope to deal with it on lines that will be acceptable to the religious interests without prejudicing the major reforms which he will have to introduce later? The danger, as we have pointed out previously, is that in agreeing to a "compromise" on the dual system he may make concessions which will, in practice, entrench the religious denominations in the field of secondary education, and thus actually add to his difficulties, instead of diminishing them, when he proceeds to his general projects of reform. Concessions to the demoninations, if they are to be made at all, ought surely to be confined to the primary schools: the new State secondary schools must not be involved in them, or the last state of education will be worse than the first.

Finance and Reality in 1943

The *Economist*, reviewing the finances of the war in 1942, puts the National Income, including indirect taxes at £8,370 millions as compared with £7,580 millions in 1941. Government expenditure in 1942 accounted for £4,950 millions, as against £4,321 millions in 1941; and thus leaves £4,690 millions for private consumption, as against £4,550 millions, after allowing for a "disinvestment" of £1,270 millions through capital depreciation and the using up of stocks. This estimate, of course, exaggerates the real "disinvestment"; for it ignores the investment value of goods paid for on Government account, such as new buildings and machinery purchased as part of the war effort. The value of these things, as post-war capital, of course, depends on their convertability to peacetime uses; and there is every reason to suppose that a considerable fraction can be so converted, though no estimate of the proportion can be made at this stage. The figures, it will be seen, show an estimated rise of ten per cent. in the National Income over those of the previous year; but a part of this increase is evidently attributable to higher prices. There was hardly any net increase in the labour force available for production during 1942, the new recruits to industry being almost fully offset by the claims of the Services. During the present year the labour force will be bound to decline, and it will not be easy to maintain total production at the level reached in 1942. As the claims of the Services will increase, not only in man-power but also in munitions, this clearly implies a further squeezing of consumption—the more so, because during 1942 there was a very considerable using up of stocks which cannot possibly be replaced.

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"A MODEL TO THE WORLD"

MR. MORRISON did at Newcastle last Sunday what the leaders of the Labour Party might do rather oftener with advantage. He devoted his whole speech to a survey of the British Empire. If this means that he is going to use the power that has come to him as a member of the War Cabinet to press onward the work of reform, especially in the economic field, we welcome this proof of his interest in a neglected subject. In contemplating the dependent Empire as a whole he feels a glow of satisfaction which we wish we could share, but he is aware of some rather extensive patches of shadow. Those who are trying to raise the standard of life of our imperial slums in Jamaica, Northern Rhodesia and Kenya, to mention only three distressing cases, will be grateful for any support he can give them.

Mr. Morrison opened with an unreal parallel drawn from the British Commonwealth. He held it up, as General Smuts lately did, as "a model to the world," by which he seemed to suggest that the very loose form of organisation which suits the daughter nations of the Dominions in their dealings with the Mother Country would work equally well as a pattern for the United Nations after the war. But France and Holland are not daughter nations. They are peoples with a long and independent history, of which they are as proud as we are of ours. The Dominions have so far been content that the British Government should act as the chairman and executive officer of an informal committee which never meets. It takes the initiative in world policy, though it is careful to secure their assent by cablegram to any new departure of importance. It would be wholly impossible to run the affairs of Europe in that way. It can be done in the British Commonwealth because it has one indisputable centre, obviously by its greater population and economic resources *primus inter pares*. But in the post-war world there will be three such centres—Washington, Moscow and London. Before that complexity the commonwealth analogy breaks down. We used to think the Labour Party pedantic in its fidelity to the institutions of the old League, exactly as they stood. Is it now going, with General Smuts, to the other extreme of calling for something "much less ambitious" than the League, something much looser—an easy-going solar system in which all the allied planets will contentedly revolve in the orbit of London? It will not work: three suns are too many.

Mr. Morrison then went on to India. The report we have before us cannot be verbatim. We know that he is concerned about its immeasurable, its sub-human poverty. Probably he recalled the fact which horrified even Lord Curzon, that in his day the yearly income of its inhabitants was £2 a head. It has risen considerably since then, but so have prices. Mr. Morrison's ministerial colleague, Tom Johnston, has again certified that over a long series of years, doubtless prosperous years, for every £12 which the British jute mills of Calcutta paid to their Indian workers they sent home in profits £100. Mr. Morrison might have dwelt at some length on the fact that for the best part of two centuries a steady annual tribute, measured by the surplus of India's exports over her imports, went from the dependency to this country. In the first three decades of this century it averaged £23 millions a year. That, over two centuries, year by year, helped to build up our capital equipment—steel mills, electric grids, workmen's dwellings. India, deprived of this surplus, did without these things. Her workers consequently inhabit pigsties, and her industrial development has only just begun.

Mr. Morrison, conscious of the fact that the greater part of India is in revolt against us, went on to say that India can have self-government after the war for the asking. We hope, however, that he added that what all her parties without exception demand is not merely self-government, but independence. We hope, too, that he fully explained to his audience that the future self-determination of India depends on the princes. These gorgeous autocrats, who rule without civil rights and appropriate for their privy purses what they please of their Budgets—one-third is a moderate share—are to nominate their delegations as they please to the Constituent Assembly. Their people will have no say. These princes are our puppets, our tenants at will, whose thrones rest on our troops. They—or the Power behind them—will control a third of the votes in any Indian Constituent Assembly. The princes have the whip hand, and not merely by their swollen vote of nominees. Their States interlock with the provinces like the pieces of a child's jig-saw puzzle. They cut across rivers, railways, electric grids. Without these States India could not live; with them she cannot be free.

With regard to the rest of the dependent Empire, Mr. Morrison's theme was that although the motive which led us to take these territories was usually "commercial," it has somehow been sublimated by our sense of duty, as time went on. What better illustration could Mr. Morrison have chosen for his thesis of sublimation than the affairs of Northern Rhodesia? The motive that took us there was assuredly commercial. It has some of the best copper ore in the world and plenty of the cheapest labour. Let us take, for example, the year 1937. The value of the copper exported was £10,704,000. Of this, close on £5,000,000 was the operating profit of the three chief companies. This was drained out of the country, dug literally out of the soil of Africa. What remained? A fairly substantial sum, about £1,000,000, did go to the Colony for public purposes in income-tax: not much of it was spent for the natives. What they got was £235,000 in wages, to be divided among 17,000 of them. The average monthly wage of a native was 12s. 6d. on the surface and 22s. 6d. underground. European wages averaged £500 a year, and in rough figures 2,000 of them got £1,000,000. These are not pleasant figures, and we wonder whether Mr. Morrison fully appreciated their significance when he embarked on his theme of sublimation. Certainly that £5,000,000 of profit came to England. Is it sufficient to reply that so stern is our sense of duty, so sensitive our obligation to the natives, that we taxed it on arrival to the extent of about £500,000, and every penny of the tax went into our own Exchequer?

Again, take the fabulous profits of the mines on the West Coast. From 1929 to 1937 the Ashanti Goldfields Corporation never paid less than 75 per cent. in dividends. In one year it paid 100 per cent., and in four years it paid bonuses ranging up to 100 per cent. in fully paid-up shares. The chiefs never get more than £300 or £400 in rent for such mines. The native worker earns an average of 1s. 5d. a day. The figures for the Gold Coast can be ascertained with a fair degree of accuracy. The annual value of its mineral exports between 1936 and 1938 averaged £5,377,000. Of this, in wages, rents, taxes and other costs, at most £2,000,000 remained in the country. Some £2,500,000 represented the profits of the companies. These figures are taken from Dr. Rita Hinden's plan for Africa. Certainly the original motive that sent us empire building was profit. In face of these figures can Mr Morrison hold that profit has no longer appreciable weight with us to-day? Will the educated native—and colour is no longer a bar to political consciousness—agree with Mr. Morrison when he says that our Colonial Empire is founded on "a motive of duty, a sense of a job to be done for the people whom we found in our care, and for the sake of our own self-respect"?

Let us not overlook one significant remark in Mr. Morrison's speech. He remarked: "Private undertakings are responsible to no one but their shareholders, and we should not have on our consciences the irresponsible handling by powerful bodies of the economic destinies of these partially developed peoples." May we see here the first shadowy adumbration of a policy of public control of colonial resources in the interest of the colonial peoples made by a British Minister? The "welfare policy," of which Mr. Morrison's speech was an excellent example, cannot indeed be carried out without drastic socialisation of the colonial structure; but a colonial policy which concentrates on welfare to the exclusion of self-government is one which ignores the tie between socialism and democracy; more, it fails to recognise the constants of human nature, since men who have bread in their bellies, begin to want to control their destinies.

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"PSYCHOLOGICAL DISARMAMENT"

THE American Administration is promoting post-war planning in every field as actively as Mr. Churchill has discouraged it. Mr. Wallace's speeches on this subject have been worthy of his creative mind. For many years I have read everything that came from this distinguished and generous personality, always with admiration and nearly always with assent. But in his broadcast from Washington on December 28th there was a passage about the re-education of Germany which filled me with dismay:

> The United Nations must back up military disarmament with psychological disarmament—the supervision or at least the inspection of the school systems of Germany and Japan to undo as far as possible the diabolical work of Hitler and the Japanese war-lords in poisoning the minds of the young.

Mr. Wallace was not speaking casually. He may have been endorsing the ideas of unofficial planners who propose to put the whole educational system of Germany, and indeed the whole of her intellectual life, under the control of a High Commissioner and an entirely foreign Council appointed by her enemies.

That any hope for the future depends on the re-education of the younger generation of Germans is a proposition no one disputes. The real crime of the last ten years was not the creation of a barbaric despotism, not the floggings, the tortures and the murders, not the extermination of the Jews, not even this wanton war against four-fifths of mankind. The real crime was the reversal of all the moral values on which civilisation rests. Of that, all these things were the inevitable consequences. It was done by Hitler and the Nazi Party deliberately and systematically, as a conscious reaction against the older Catholic tradition, no less than the modern outlook which dates from Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment. It made an end of intellectual integrity; it scoffed at humanity; it raised brutality to the seat of honour among the Nordic virtues. In the youth it deliberately inculcated a state of mind and a code of behaviour to which gangster and fanatic contributed in equal parts.

Many of these perverted youths lie dead in Russia, and many more will die. Some may be irreclaimable. But others, perhaps the majority, are even now on the edge of disillusionment, fighting against the growing conviction that they have been misled. Who will restore them to civilisation? Who will give them back the traditional heritage they were denied? Who will change their moral values? Who will fit them to think and feel as Europeans?

There are Germans who can do it. There are brave men in the Underground Movement who never ceased to struggle. There are many more less heroic who did not struggle but kept their faith in silence. There are priests, like the Bishop of Berlin, who sometimes dared to speak. There are exiles like Thomas Mann. Finally, there are teachers who worked under the Weimar Republic. Many were dismissed. Some went to Dachau. But many, especially the women, survive. I can recall happy hours spent among them during the most miserable inflation years. They showed me the schools they had fitted up by organising voluntary unpaid work and the bits of equipment they had bought with their own dwindling salaries; they described their enlightened experiments in educational method, and once, in Hamburg, they introduced me to their Soviet of Parents, which fathered the elementary school and mothered it, sometimes by hard manual work, in every conceivable way. I had a friend in a little town in Baden who had started a *Volkshochschule* (W.E A.) and conscripted me one evening to help him in explaining Shakespeare (in translation) to a most friendly class of young working men and women. I recall another day spent in the workers' section of Frankfurt University, which the Republic generously supported and the brilliant Socratic performance of one of its teachers of economic history who showed his pupils how to think, not by lecturing but by a dialectical process. He may have been smashed at Dachau. But some of these men and more of the women are still alive. They must re-educate Germany. No one else can.

If we set about it in the way Mr. Wallace proposes we shall wreck every chance of any happy mental evolution, discredit all that is best in Germany, and prepare a disastrous reaction against us and our ideas. If we wish that an ideal of international solidarity should revive in Germany the fatal course is to impose it. We are the enemy. We bombed Germany's cities. We shall come with blood on our hands. It had to be. We were defending Europe and ourselves. But will the German mother whose husband fell to the machine gun of one of our planes regard the English or American High Commissioner who controls her children's education as anything but an enemy? Imagine the response of the more intelligent lads in an upper form, when a new teacher begins to criticise Nazi doctrine and to preach internationalism. The unfortunate man may be perfectly sincere: these may be his lifelong opinions. But the boys will see in him only a hireling of the enemy, appointed by us to keep Germany weak and enslave her mind. Worse still, not only will discredit fall on the teachers we appoint; those we dismiss will become, each in his own circle, national martyrs. Of course there must be a drastic purge; but Germans must carry it out. Of course new men must be found and the devoted teachers of the old days restored. But again, Germans must do it.

When first I met these floating ideas my response was one of undeserved contempt. "This is childish," I said to myself. "If we control the schools, of course Germans will circumvent us outside the schools. They will teach a militant patriotism in the Youth Movement. They will publish heroic Nordic books for boys and histories for young men which may be rather more readable than any of our censored school books written to order. They will write lively *feuilletons* and serial novels for the daily press. Nor will they forget the wireless and the films." On further inquiry I find that I did these planners an injustice. Some Allied experts have foreseen all that I foresaw. Their precautions are ample. I can detect only one rather grave omission: they have forgotten to provide for any control of the German churches. Everything else is tight and tidy. The High Commissioner of the United Nations is to control the whole of Germany's intellectual life from the universities to the movies. He is to censor and may confiscate German books, newspapers, periodicals, the wireless and the cinema. What is suggested is no temporary military censorship, but a permanent control designed to eradicate all doctrines which the High Commissioner may consider militaristic or anti-social. In particular he is to be empowered to ferret out all the standard Nazi books, collect every copy of *Mein Kampf*, and reduce them to pulp. He is to supervise not merely the Youth Movement but every organised activity of Young Germany. On the positive side it is suggested that he shall organise on a big scale translations from our current literature. The enlistment of teachers from the United Nations is to be promoted. Finally—the true Vansittart touch—university professors exiled by the Nazis are to be discouraged from returning: the really dangerous Germans are the "good Germans."

This is a programme for the enslavement of the German mind. First we appoint men to teach Germans what we, their enemies, wish them to think. Next, by a censorship, we forbid them to reply to our teaching or react against it. This is a sacrilege against reason. No social philosophy deserves the name of a rational system of thought unless it may be freely confronted on equal terms by its contraries. Unless I may oppose to it Fascism, Racialism, Communism at will, your Anglo-American Capitalist Democracy is merely an imposed dogma. As an essay in educational method the plan is contemptible. A good teacher with a class of senior lads to instruct, so far from confiscating their copies of *Mein Kampf*, would help them to analyse this ill-written book till they perceived its insanity. The wickedness of this scheme is equalled only by its stupidity. Every self-respecting German will retaliate by boycotting us, our language, our books, and unhappily our ideas as well. Every German who helps us will be branded as a deserter and a quisling. I am not sure how long the planners propose that this system shall continue. Some seem to have a decade in mind, others a generation. Long before it comes to an end it will have provoked the most furious reaction in European history. The best to hope for is that this may turn in a Communist direction, but it is more probable that it will evolve as a violent, racial patriotism, conceivably in an even uglier form than the Nazis invented. I do not assume that Mr. Wallace belongs to this school of thought. But his brief outline was based on its central idea.

I will resist the temptation to inquire into the record of international achievement which justifies us in appointing ourselves Germany's schoolmaster. The stern sacrifices we made to international duty at Munich and in Spain? The risks America shouldered for Europe during the two decades between Versailles and Pearl Harbour? Our devotion to the ideal of racial equality during two centuries in India? I am more curious to discover the reasons which underlie a set of ideas rather widely current in Allied circles. Are they merely lack of imagination and an excess of self-esteem? The key to it lies in the assumption that the Allies will themselves undertake for a prolonged period not merely the military occupation of Germany but its actual government—even in a matter so intimate as education. Why? Do I guess aright if I suggest that the chief motive is the fear of social revolution? Left to themselves the Germans might form a People's Front: there might come into being an alliance between Left-Wing Catholics, Communists and perhaps some Socialists; conceivably they would socialise heavy industry and the Junker estates. That would never do: the Steel Trust has other views. Since as yet we have no German Darlan ready to our hands, we propose a period of Crown Colony Government. At all costs Europe must be made safe for capitalism. It will not work. We shall tire of it—but only after we have antagonised half a continent, thwarted its will to create and distorted its natural evolution.

These planners have thought too narrowly about education. Of course schools and universities have their importance, and so have books, films and radio. But more important than all these is the environment, national and international. The planners perceive, truly enough, that the danger lies in what they call "anti-social" thinking. How does a boy or girl come to think socially? My answer is as simple as it is confident. By growing up in a genuine society. Societies are of many sorts and sizes. Most of us get some glimpse of what a true society can be, perhaps in a big family, perhaps at school, or in a trade union. Even the Nazis had their definite conception of what a society should be, and they made societies of several grades on this evil model. These rested on the Führer principle, absolute obedience, the denial of equal rights, and the claim of the stronger racial group to dominate and exploit the rest, subject to no law save its own interest and the will of its Leader. ~~The success~~ of ~~any process of re-education~~ depends on building round this younger German generation a society, or rather a hierarchy of societies, resting on civilised principles. What societies matter most in the modern world? First the factory mine, farm or newspaper in which a man works Secondly, the municipality and the national State. Thirdly, the Great Society, the international environment within which a nation moves—suffers and acts, gives and receives. We cannot build up for the Germans the industrial and national societies in which they will live. That must be their work. We shall help them negatively by destroying the military power which defended the Nazi industrial and political structures; but that is the utmost we should do. If we try, indirectly, no doubt, to perpetuate capitalism in Germany, we shall renew the life of a very faulty social form. A capitalistic factory, here or in Germany, is a totalitarian society, based on unequal rights and subject to the will of an owner-Führer. Men doomed to work in such a factory will never become truly social beings. It is an environment which represses most of them and for wrong ends. My first contention is, then, that in this field we must leave the Germans free to experiment and create. But to build the Great Society round them will be primarily our work. If a hedge of steel confronts them; if, disarmed, they can only bow to our will; if they feel themselves neither comrades nor equals, but objects submissive to our policy, then again they will feel and act in an anti-social way. They can become good members of the international society only if it is built, not on the balance of power, but on a federal equality in right and service. We cannot by censorship and control eradicate anti-social ideas from their minds. We can do it only by building round them and for them a good European society.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

PERISH THE THOUGHT

The principal obstacle to the Dakar Fleet sailing out to the Atlantic and striking a blow at the U-boats appears to be barnacles.—*Daily Express*, 12th January.

EVERYONE spread alarmist versions,
Everyone guessed what the cause might be
When, in spite of Allied exertions,
French ships failed to put to sea.
Everyone knew the Fleet was free,
Everyone cried "Perfidious Gaul!"
Now we take back such base aspersions—
It was barnacles after all.

Dangerous rumour and idle chatter,
Hints of shirking and compromise,
Seeds of baseless suspicion scatter—
Careless gossip may cost Allies.
Misunderstandings must then arise.
Looming up like a Chinese Wall,
When we are told what was the matter—
It was barnacles after all.

Muzzle slander and gag suspicion,
Evil forces are not in play
Though at home we await transition
To the rainbow dawn of a brighter day.
Far from the facts our fancies stray
If plotting Tories our minds appal—
Now let us make the frank admission,
It is barnacles after all.

Every ship of State has got 'em,
Every Service Department too;
Barnacles hide, but when we spot 'em
Everyone knows the thing to do.
Drag the barnacles into view,
Give the vessel an overhaul—
Scrape the barnacles off the bottom,
What are barnacles, after all?

SAGITTARIUS

A LONDON DIARY

Some ministers of religion, Church of England and Nonconformist, are doubtful, I gather, of their capacity to make their pulpits as attractive as stage performances. That seems the chief reason advanced against the motion for removing the ban on Sunday theatres. It is hard to take the argument very seriously, because even if it is held that it is better to go to Church than to the theatre (which depends on the Church and on the theatre), it still remains more than doubtful whether shut theatres add to Church congregations. If theatres were open, some thousands of tired people who need refreshment would find it. As it is, few of them go to Church; they swell the long queues which you can see any Sunday night waiting to get into the cinemas; they jostle in the streets, and kiss, often without affection, on wet street corners. The Roman Church, of course, knows all this well enough; mass is compulsory, and by tradition the rest of Sunday is for recreation. Many Catholics favour Sunday theatres. I doubt if we can afford to allow the nation any longer to follow these timorous preachers who fear the "Continental Sunday." I wish ours was one-half as refreshing. Behind the opposition there is something less rational. Cinemas came late on the scene and, so to speak, by-passed prejudice. But actors remain, in the dark recesses of some Puritan minds, dimly associated with Rogues and Vagabonds and Immorality. I see that Equity and the Variety Artists' Federation are meeting this week to choose a deputation to meet M.P.s in the House of Commons. Many of the serious artists seem to be in favour of being allowed to work on Sundays; if those who take the other view understood why they are restricted to week-days, I am sure they would change their minds.

* * *

Nine by-elections might amount to a sort of minimum general election; unfortunately the Party truce deprives it of much political significance. I should like to see the return of Tom Wintringham, who with Sir Richard Acland now leads Common Wealth. He should be a good Scottish candidate. He is a very reasonable man. Common Wealth also has a candidate at Ashford. Mrs. Williamson has been twice elected Mayor of Canterbury and held her post with great distinction during the Battle of Britain. Tom Sargent, who comes from an old Radical family and is now assistant manager of a non-ferrous metal works and the author of *These Things Shall Be*, is Common Wealth candidate at Portsmouth North. Common Wealth is also supporting Jennie Lee at Bristol Central. It must be odd for Jennie Lee to find herself standing against an I.L.P. candidate. She sacrificed her political career by almost an excess of loyalty to the I.L.P. in Scotland. I doubt if she has really held I.L.P. views for a long time. But she stuck to her group and gave up her prospects in the Labour Party. Now she is standing as an Independent in a constituency where the betting is on Lady Apsley, who has been chosen by the Conservatives to succeed her husband. She should feel fairly safe if all seven candidates really stand. The fragmentation of political life is an inevitable result of the political truce.

* * *

It is partly for this reason that I regret the decision of Sir Stafford Cripps to take on his present job. I could see many arguments in its favour. I am sure that he does it well; he began with just the right note when he took over the management of an unsatisfactory works, and he is certainly doing right in holding public meetings and speaking on the platform with representative technicians. Sir Stafford has a particular opportunity, I believe, with that large and increasingly important and revolutionary group, the technician class, which may run the world tomorrow. But when all is said, I believe that Sir Stafford Cripps' proper position was leading (he would inevitably have been leader) a critical and constructive Opposition. Nothing would more encourage efficiency in war or better encourage hopes for the peace than an Opposition that looked responsible and serious. There are able free-lances like Shinwell and Aneurin Bevan, who throw brickbats at the Government's head, but in the long run the only thing that persuades a government to modify its policy or which crystallises responsible opinion is an Opposition front bench which could in certain circumstances become an alternative government. In that position Sir Stafford might have had a long time to wait, but it is there that his influence would have counted most in the long run.

* * *

If I were Mr. Eden or Mr. Morrison, or indeed any member of the British War Cabinet, I should be made to feel profoundly uncomfortable by Mr. Gollancz's pamphlet *Let My People Go*. If he had written a tirade it would have given timid bureaucracy an excuse for neglect. But he has kept strictly to the facts and possibilities. When Mr. Morrison told Miss Rathbone that she was wrong in thinking that an alteration of the policy with regard to the issue of visas would have any substantial effect in facilitating the rescue of Jews who were being murdered, Mr. Gollancz asks what Mr. Morrison means by "substantial." Before the occupation of France there were individual cases of people waiting daily, lying in open boats or in hiding along the coast, who have since presumably been done to death in some more or less horrible manner, and who could surely have been saved by the British. There were those few hundred people who were got off in old boats like the *Struma* and who died terribly because the authorities in Palestine would not let them enter. Are not these, Mr. Gollancz asks, "substantial" matters? Again, there are to-day a certain number, perhaps of individuals, perhaps some hundreds, perhaps some thousands, who could be rescued if the neutral governments, who have the power to give them refuge, were also assured that refugees would be given temporary safety in this country, in the Empire or in some part of the American continent. There is no reason why after the war Jewish exiles should not return to their homes in Europe or become excellent colonists in devastated regions. There is no question of flooding this country with refugees; they ask of civilisation that simple hospitality and right of temporary asylum that is taken for granted in the most primitive societies.

* * *

George Washington Carver was one of the many disproofs of the Nazi-American-South African (not so much British nowadays) theory of racial superiority. The son of a slave, once, it is said, exchanged for a horse, he had no education until he learnt to write and read at 20 He became one of the leading chemists and inventors of the United States, thus proving conclusively, if proof were really needed, that it is the grey matter inside the head, not the wool or the pigmentation that grows on its surface, that is important. After all, if a negro who has had to fight against so many handicaps should reach the front ranks of science, then the problem of keeping the negro down—"in his place," as they say—becomes really very difficult. As it is, about one-fifth of the money spent on a white's education is now devoted to that of the negro. And yet some of them will come up. Nor is it only in agricultural research that negroes nowadays show themselves the equal of whites. Carver's chief success was with peanuts and sweet potatoes, out of which he seems to be able to make anything from a breakfast cereal to a high explosive bomb. Other perhaps less talented negroes are first-class skilled workers, and one of them who had not been allowed to learn to shoot, made himself famous at Pearl Harbour by continuing to fire a gun (that the Navy Department did not allow him to touch) when his white comrades were dead. A significant incident. There is a big story to tell about the efforts of the negroes to-day to win full acceptance to equality, and the terror of some Southern whites lest, in fact, they should succeed.

* * *

To me and to many Americans this colour distinction is humiliating in the extreme. Paul Robeson, for instance, is one of the most distinguished Americans. Everyone knows Paul has a voice; those privileged to possess his personal friendship know him to be one of the best companions and one of the finest of human beings intellectually and morally. Yet when Paul came to see me in my hotel in New York he would have had to expect insults had we eaten together in the hotel dining room, and it would have been difficult for him to come to see me in my room. We could meet in the hotel lounge, and there are some restaurants where we could eat together. But if the Robesons lived in New York they would either have to stay with friends in Greenwich Village or to live out at Harlem. Harlem, like other ghettos, is largely an overcrowded slum, because since the tenants cannot move away, there is nothing to force the landlord to rebuild or do repairs. People who know it at all are apt to only think of the dance halls where you can hear the best dance bands and watch the best jitter-bugging, but the political bitterness of Harlem and the bitterness of the coloured people in the South, and indeed all over the States, is growing. It grows because in a war for liberty, in which the President and Mrs. Roosevelt have done all they can to assure the negro that they wish his equality, the restrictions that remain in industry and the jim-crow segregation that is maintained in the South become more obviously intolerable. It is recorded that a young negro who enlisted after Pearl Harbour said, "Just put on my tombstone: 'Here lies a black man, killed fighting a yellow man for the protection of a white man.'" But I must write at greater length on this topic, which is to me at once the most tragic and most interesting of all American problems.

Critic

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to B. I. Wherrett.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Much has been written during recent months on the question of "Post-war reconstruction," a term which I rather dislike. It rather suggests that something has been destroyed.—Report in *British Stationer*.

He is a cricketer, a clubman, a connoisseur of good wine, and, for all his charm, very tough—the ideal combination for a Conservative M.P.—*Evening Standard*.

Annie Rigbye, aged 45, a church worker and nurse, who stole four pairs of sheets from an infectious diseases hospital and gave them as wedding presents to two clergymen, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment at Portsmouth Quarter Sessions yesterday.—Report in *Manchester Guardian*.

The snowdrop is more powerful than the Panzer.—Beverley Nichols in *Sunday Chronicle*.

When Chernyshev was captured 2,000,000 shells, we read, were "included" in the booty.

Laid lengthwise these shells would reach from London to Bombay.—Letter in *Daily Telegraph*.

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MUDDLED MUZZLING

The suspension of publication by some one hundred and fifty Indian newspapers, as a protest against censorship methods, is a little matter which seems to have escaped the notice of the British Press and public. It is, perhaps, worthy of more attention: not only because it is a pointer to the present situation in India, but also because it is in itself a new milestone in a long and interesting struggle. "A free Press," wrote Lord Elphinstone (Governor of Bombay) in 1857, just before the famous "Gagging Act" was passed, "seems to be the natural concomitant of free institutions. It is on the other hand from its very nature antagonistic to despotic rule, and, above all, to foreign domination. As Sir Thomas Munro tersely expresses it, 'a free Press, and the dominion of strangers, are things which are quite incompatible, and which cannot long exist together.'"

The struggle of the Indian Press, which has reflected the contest, first of all, between British Imperialist and British liberal notions, and secondly, at a later stage, the clash between India and Britain, has ebbed and flowed for some 160 years, steadily eroding the cliffs of Imperialism. It is worth noting that from 1780 to 1823 the fight was exclusively British: Government officials were incensed, not against Indian editors or journals, but against "the European community" which presumed to criticise them in print. Despotism was in full swing, and editors like Hicky, Duane and Maclean—the real pioneers of Indian journalism—were deported without further ado. The first Indian editor to come into the limelight was Raja Ram Mohun Roy, who, in an extremely eloquent petition to the King against the restrictions imposed on the Press by Adam in 1823, stated that they would "preclude the natives from communicating to Their Gracious Sovereign . . . the real condition of His Majesty's faithful subjects in this distant part of his dominions, and the treatment they experience from the local Government, since such information cannot in future be conveyed to England" and appealed "by the honour of that great nation which under Your Royal Auspices has obtained the glorious title of Liberator of Europe, not to permit the possibility of millions of Your subjects being wantonly trampled on and oppressed."

Lord Hastings was the first Governor-General to support the idea of a free Press. "If our motives of action are worthy," he wrote in 1818, "it must be wise to render them intelligible throughout an Empire, our hold on which is opinion." Metcalfe, 17 years later, echoed the sentiment. "A tenure dependent on attempts to suppress the communication of public opinion could not be lasting: both because such a tenure must be rotten, and because such attempts must fail." But, while liberalising tendencies appear here and there in Governors, the main host of officials, as to-day, could not brook criticism, and the growth of Indian nationalism, together with the growth of the Press, gave them their opportunities. The ebb of drastic restriction, the flow of repeal, have followed one another throughout Indian journalistic history: the crisis of to-day is only remarkable for being of a new and more highly organised character, and therefore, perhaps, more threatening, But the muddle between the necessities of despotic rule and the desire for a free Press is much as it was in the early nineteenth century.

The present conflict centres round an enactment which we can trace back to Sir John Adam's Act of 1813 (when he succeeded Hastings), which was repealed in 1818, re-enacted in 1878 and repealed in 1881—pre-censorship. This measure was introduced in October, 1940, and hurriedly withdrawn in November: since August, 1942, it has once more come into operation. It is felt to be both insulting and unnecessary: insulting, because by insisting on previous scrutiny of matter by a "Press Adviser" it denies responsibliity to journalists: unnecessary because the record of the Indian Press has been, in the circumstances, a good one. This last point was admitted by the Government when, in withdrawing the amendments of October, 1940, they stated that they had "intended no reflection on the Press, whose consistent support since the outbreak of war in the struggle against totalitarian powers they readily and gratefully acknowledge."

The immensity of India, the diversity of its languages, and the political atmosphere make Press control difficult. The Indian Press ranges from respectable and well-informed papers down to scurrilous and ephemeral sheets which are not above blackmail. The number of leading newspapers in India is given in Mrs. Barns's relevant and excellent book* on the subject as 32 English dailies, 75 vernacular dailies, and 130 weeklies (in some cases tri- or bi-weeklies). We do not know which of these took part in the *hartal*, but it seems that most of the dailies must have done so. It arose directly, according to the *Times* correspondent, from the suppression (and Bhansali's hunger strike in that connection) of an "incident" at Chimur. It was "called" by Mr. Srinavasan, the veteran and respected editor of the *Hindu*, who is also President of the All-India Newspaper Editors Conference. That Conference had met in October at Bombay to protest against the August restrictions.

The A.I.N.E.C. is important, because it marks a big step in the organisation of India's journalism. It first met at Delhi on November 10th, 1940, to protest against the October enactments of that year. That those measures were wrong-headed seems to be shown by their hurried withdrawal. That some bitterness remained may be deduced from the Conference's resolution, on that occasion, welcoming "the change thus indicated" but urging the Government to "restore the atmosphere of confidence," to see that "orders to journalists were communicated with due courtesy and consideration" and to "review various punitive measures taken against certain newspapers." However, a "Gentleman's Agreement" seems to have been reached by which the Press would be consulted if and when further action became necessary.

That was conveniently forgotten on August 8th. Pre-censorship was imposed instantly on all matter connected with the Congress movement, or with disturbances or demonstrations due to that movement or not, or with any measures whatsoever taken by the Government to deal with the movement. The instructions were such as could be, and were, variously interpreted by the various Provinces. (The Chief Commissioner of Delhi ordered the Hindustan *Times* to print "not more than three columns" of "news of the present disturbances.") The Standing Committee of the A.I.N.E.C. met at Delhi on August 24th, and in their protest to Government criticised particularly the enactment that "an editor who opposes the measures taken by Government to suppress the movement will be guilty of an offence against the law." On October 5th the A.I.N.E.C. met at Bombay. At this meeting Mr. B. G. Horniman, a veteran journalist who served the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Statesman* of Calcutta before becoming editor of the *Bombay Chronicle* and then the *Bombay Sentinel*, made for the first time, I think, the suggestion that two could play at the game of suppression. "We are capable," he said, "of effecting a complete black-out of all Government news and propaganda." Hence, perhaps, came the idea, not only of a general strike, but also of banning—as some Indian papers have apparently done—the publication of speeches by British officials, and items such as Honours Lists.

The Conference unanimously passed a resolution, and those supporting it included, among many well-known editors, Sir Francis Low of the *Times of India* and Mr. I. M. Stephens, of the *Calcutta Statesman*, who was at one time Director of Information to the Government of India. One paragraph of the resolution ran:

> The Conference views with dismay the suppression and suspension of a number of newspapers as a result of the new restrictions and the manner of their operation. The fact that newspapers find it difficult to perform their duties to the public increases unrest throughout the country, multiplies the forces of rumour, and is a direct aid to enemy propaganda, which can point to the disappearance of newspapers as proof of an oppressive régime.

The resolution also included a paragraph which, while vigorously condemning pre-censorship—"compulsory Press Advising and Scrutiny give Government officials power to control at every stage not only the publication but even the character of factual news"—reaffirmed in decisive terms the necessity for restraint in regard to all subversive activity, illegal acts, or exaggerated statements: and in regard to anything which might retard the restoration of public security. Once again the ban was withdrawn. Once again, when Bhansali's hunger strike threatened to publicise Chimur, the suppression was enforced. Now it appears that, after all, the facts are to be released.

Indian journalistic history seems to show that repressive measures do not pay. National and political voices cannot be wholly stilled, even in wartime. And the stilling process does us little credit. It seems the more remarkable that the British Press, which shouts so loudly and incessantly about Freedom, should be content, in this instance, to preserve a glaring silence.

LIONEL FIELDEN

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* The Indian Press. Margarita Barns. *George Allen and Unwin.* 21s.

SIGNPOSTS

For the first time since 1939, I spent the weekend in a country hotel. As we went for a walk—of about two hundred yards—in the morning, a friend who was with me said: "Hulloa! The signposts are back again." He was obviously elated as he read out the inscriptions on the white boards—½ mile to Chipping-Something-or-Other, 2½ miles to Bowling-under-Bracken, 37 miles to Oxford. It was as though a miracle had happened, and, after a long period of obscuration the almost forgotten sun had shone again. I confess I was surprised at my own lack of surprise on seeing the world looking as normal as it looked a year or two ago. I ought to have been all the more pleasantly surprised since I had not heard of the removal of the ban on signposts. The sight of the signposts, however, did not stir my imagination as it should have done. They seemed so natural a part of the landscape that it was difficult to believe they had not always been there and to see in them especial omens of good news, as in some respects they are.

Yet how one missed them when they first vanished at a time when a German invasion of England was thought to be at least possible? What a Hampton-Court maze all England became to a motorist trying to find his way to some unfamiliar spot in Surrey! The motorist's difficulties were added to by the refusal of some particularly patriotic people to tell strangers the way. There was a widespread theory that any stranger driving a car might be a spy, and that to put him on the right road to Dorking might be playing into the hands of the enemy. One day, I saw a motorist pulling up and asking a farmer the way to a neighbouring town. As the farmer was giving him the information, a woman shouted from her garden: "Don't tell him. You know you're not supposed to tell strange men the way now." The farmer protested that he knew the man; but the woman warned him that giving information to suspicious characters such as strangers driving along the roads in motor-cars was a criminal offence. "What I say is," she observed, turning to me for support, "is, suspect everybody. You can't be too careful, and the more innocent a stranger looks the more likely he is to be a German spy."

On my few journeys along the roads at the time, I was fortunately never lost for lack of guidance from passers-by. Soldiers and policemen were particularly ready to tell one the best route to Horsham or Haywards Heath. It was a nuisance to travel in unknown country, because one had to stop so often to find out where one was and how to get to the place one was aiming at. But there were willing helpers in every village and it was only the imaginative—always a minority—who were likely to take one for a spy.

Whether the removal of the signposts was ever necessary I do not know. I cannot help thinking that, if a German army had ever invaded England, it could have found its way from Abinger Hatch to Abinger Hammer without the help of a signpost. The authorities, however, were justly zealous in their desire to bewilder the enemy. In some parts of the country, I have been told, ancient milestones had the names of places on them chiselled out of recognition. Some people even took the names of their cottages from the gates, as though a German might have learnt something useful from knowing that he had reached "Nirvana" or "Crosskeys." One of the oddest features of the period was the obliteration of the names of religious sects from the notice-boards outside churches. In consequence of this, a stranger to a village could not tell whether the little chapel on the green was Baptist or Methodist or Congregational. I remember reading in some paper or other a letter from an embittered Methodist complaining that during the week-end he had found himself worshipping much against his will, at a Baptist service, and pleading for the restoration of the old notice-boards, so that a religious man would know where to go for a service that he could enjoy. If there are no notice-boards outside the churches to guide them, young people may drift unsuspectingly even into Unitarian places of worship. Still, it was pleasant to think of a German general being held up with his army while he tried to make out whether the building he had just reached was a Methodist or a Congregational chapel. "Puzzle the enemy" is a good rule. As things turned out, however, the only people in England who were puzzled by all these anti-invasion measures were the natives.

To-day, I imagine, these measures are no longer necessary. And England will probably soon become a land of signposts again, though without the petrol that makes signposts useful to the civilian. Milestones will be allowed to tell once more how many miles it is to the next town, and churches will be permitted to announce the denomination of their worshippers. I shall welcome the change back, though I have no sentimental associations with such things as signposts. Growing up in a world of horse-traffic, I never experienced the motorist's helplessness in the absence of topographical information at every crossroads. In those days, when the radius of ordinary travel by road was so small, we all knew the way to any place that could be reached in a polo-cart. Milestones, on the other hand, did add something to the pleasures of travel—especially of travel on foot. There was something inspiriting in the sight of an old moss-grown block of stone that told one that one was another mile nearer Coleraine. A journey seems shorter if we measure it by units, and a milestone is not a bad thing to sit down beside to meditate on the next stage towards one's destination. The powerful effect of milestones on the imagination is shown in the story of Dick Whittington and his cat, for it was while sitting on a milestone on Highgate Hill that he heard the London bells calling him back to become the most picturesque Lord Mayor in the annals of the city. This milestone, it is said, was removed and put in storage for the duration of the war, as it might in some conceivable circumstances, though not conceivable by me, have given valuable aid to the enemy. I think, now that the London bells have been allowed to ring again, the Whittington milestone might be replaced. If the Germans ever got to Highgate, they would not need a milestone to be told how far they were from London.

One point of superiority that milestones have over signposts is that they cannot lie. It is, no doubt, possible for practical jokers to dig up a milestone from its right position and to set it up misleadingly two or three hundred yards away. But I have never heard of any enthusiastic humourists doing such a thing. Signposts, on the other hand, were fairly often in peacetime the toys of practical jokers. There was a base fellow, for example, who once changed the direction of the signpost at Toot Hill, near Ongar, in Essex, to the distruction of the happiness of innumerable motorists. "Motorists," writes a historian of the occasion, "going from Epping to Chelmsford through Toot Hill, found themselves after a journey of over 15 miles back in Epping again."

About the same time another practical joker got busy with signposts at Chenies, in Buckinghamshire. "The signposts were turned round, with the result that motorists desiring to get to Chesham found themselves at Rickmansworth and vice versa. While others were directed into a cul-de-sac leading to the church." Perhaps it was the same lively spirit who thought of the notion of reversing the "30" signs at Amersham, "giving motorists the impression that the town was derestricted and the roads leading out of it restricted."

Now, I have just been reading *The Wrong Box* again, so that I cannot honestly say that practical jokes are never funny. Still, though it may be funny to change the labels on the packing-cases in a railway-train so that a timid man expecting a statue finds himself in possession of a corpse, I cannot see much fun in misleading motorists. There is a fine sentence in the Commination Service in the Prayer Book: "Cursed is he that maketh the blind to go out of his way"; and I should like to see this amended so as to lay the curse on anyone who made even a motorist go out of his way. It is all very well to go to Birmingham by way of Beachy Head if you are in the mood for such things; but motorists usually prefer more direct routes, and I put the man who plays jokes with signposts on a level with the black marketeer.

Let us hope, then, that when the 100,000 signposts that have been removed from English roads are restored to their places they will no longer be a temptation to the sense of humour even of a drunken adolescent. And let us hope that they will be restored soon. It is nice to know the way even to places to which for lack of petrol one cannot go. The fork of the roads looks rather naked without signposts. Signposts will give the country a properly dressed look, a cheerful appearance of revival. Y.Y.

THE COACH OF LIFE

By Pushkin.

The swaying coach, for all its load,
  Runs lightly as it rocks;
Gray Time goes driving down the road
  And never leaves his box.

We jump into the coach at dawn,
  Alert and fresh and free,
And holding broken bones in scorn,
  "Go on!" shout we.

By midday all is changed about,
  Our morning hearts are cool;
We fear the steep descents and shout:
  "Go slow, you fool!"

At dusk we're used to jolt and din,
  And when the light is gone
We sleep before we reach the inn,
  As Time drives on.

Translated by FRANCES CORNFORD

THE MOVIES

"Casablanca" and "Over the Duty Line," at Warner's

"The Brains Trust"

To Rick's Bar in Casablanca come the crooks, the quislings, the Boche "tourists," the refugees, Frenchmen of all colours, and the captains of police and of the Gestapo. It represents a free corner, though a dangerous one, where men can still hunt or hide, from which the clipper leaving the airport provides a gateway to Lisbon and America. A passage for two, signed by Weygand and with the name spaces empty, is the document in the case. Who has it, how much will be paid for it, who will get away in the end? There's Rick himself (Humphrey Bogart), café proprietor and *âme damnée*; the girl he was once in love with (Ingrid Bergmann); her husband (Paul Henreid), escaped from a concentration camp and an anti-Nazi leader of the future; and various others, from Peter Lorre (quickly removed from the scene) to Sydney Greenstreet peddling passports and running a café in another street. John Qualen is trying to sell a diamond and belongs to the underground movement. Claude Rains is head of the French police and a political weather-cock. The Gestapo is handsomely represented by Conrad Veidt (with moustache). All the Hollywood talent for mystery, in fact, is there and it would be surprising if this weren't a successful film, of Oppenheim vintage. Atmosphere is laid on with a trowel: very good set, brilliant photography. Each actor gets a chance to do his or her turn. All that's wrong with *Casablanca* is that despite an exciting plot, the characters never walk out of their magazine covers; the love story that takes us from time to time into the past is horribly wooden and clichés everywhere lower the tension. Bogart, perhaps, had to have a heart of gold, but the sentimental peripeteia by which he gives up his passage in the plane at the last moment is tough—much too tough. One saw it coming, too, for a long while.

A documentary in the same programme at Warner's contrasts oddly with our own war documentaries. *Over the Duty Line* tells briefly the story of a modest little man in a cowboy hat who becomes a pilot and performs incredible feats of daring against the Japs in the South Pacific. The story is true to fact, and the chief part is taken by the pilot himself, who is afterwards seen addressing audiences of workers in aircraft factories. Personally I did not find this film, which is very well done of its sort, half as moving as our own less personal but no less heroic documentaries.

Strand Films give us at last the chance of seeing the Brains Trust in the flesh. For half an hour they answer questions on happiness in marriage, the future of agriculture, astrology, Right and Left in politics, motor cars, favourite characters in fiction, as coolly as though the camera weren't there. Joad, perhaps, looks a little coy at times, and he certainly takes the eye, sitting most of the time with his hands warming a glass of water as though it contained rare burgundy. After this the Brains Trust ought to be as popular as Walt Disney. In fact there are resemblances to the Disney troupe. Mr. McCullough makes a good Mickey, Joad gives us Donald Duck, Campbell is Pluto. And Goofy? He sends in the questions.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Humphrey Spender at the Redfern

At first sight Mr. Humphrey Spender's pictures appear those of a naive "Sunday painter." Then one notices that he represents buildings with positive slickness; moreover his interest in vaguely surrealist shapes reveals a sophisticated eye. A suspicion therefore arises that he has deliberately modelled his treatment on the work of the "modern primitives" recently so fashionable in Paris, Vivin for instance and Beauchant. One hopes that this suspicion is unfounded, for the sham simpleton is one of the more tiresome by-products of the modern world. In any case Mr. Spender might profit by study of the Masters, for he sometimes stumbles in the grammar of composition. The spidery shapes he employs may express the chaos caused by industrialism or bombardment, but they fail to construct the unity required in a work of art. In this respect he may be thought to resemble those young poets whose disgust with the horrid world in which they find themselves emerges directly in scrannel yelps instead of being transmuted into music. Most of Mr. Spender's works, however, show sensibility and imagination; and in one of them, *City Devastation*, he has achieved formal beauty. One looks forward therefore with interest to his next exhibition, before which he may have had the chance to study not only natural appearances, but the Italian Masters. His gifts deserve to be further developed.

In the next room are some Rouault aquatints which it is a privilege to see again, tragic and noble examples of religious art. One thinks of the Brangwyn Stations of the Cross in the Campion Hall chapel and wonders why Catholics no longer make use of the greatest artists.

Correspondence

ELECTRICITY IN THE HIGHLANDS

[Out of a flood of correspondence evoked by Miss White's article "Fascism in the Highlands," we select a lengthy rejoinder by the Scottish Labour Whip and, in Miss White's support, the view of an expert with intimate knowledge of the scheme.—ED., N.S. & N.].

SIR,—For the past twenty years the Highlands of Scotland have been the scene of a perplexing drama. The depression which began with the Clearances has been steadily deepening. As the means of livelihood dwindled or disappeared, more and more of the Highland population have drifted South to the industrial areas, or have emigrated. The glens have emptied and the towns have shrunk. For anyone—and there were many—who admired the North-West and its people the spectacle was depressing.

This deadening drift away occurred despite the existence in the Highlands of a source of power whose development could have transformed the whole outlook for the area. In the industrial use of the North-West's vast water power resources lay the possibility of giving the Highlands and the Highlanders a future as well as a past. The report of the Water Power Resources Committee of 1921 had revealed that Scotland had potential water power resources with a capacity equal to a continuous electrical output of 217,965 kw., while the equivalent figure for Wales was 35,900 kw., and for England 20,440 kw.

Various efforts were made to develop this source of power. In all, between 1929 and the outbreak of war, six Northern Scottish schemes were promoted. All were rejected. The subject became enwrapped in an atmosphere of embittered controversy, and it seemed that, with suspicion and prejudice dominating the scene, no fruitful result would ever emerge.

It was against this background that the Secretary of State for Scotland appointed a Committee "to consider (*a*) the practicability and desirability of further developments in the use of water power resources in Scotland for the generation of electricity, and (*b*) by what type of authority or body such developments, if any, should be undertaken, and under what conditions, having due regard to the general interests of the local population and to considerations of amenity, and to report."

Mr. Johnston's motive was clear. He was determined to make a supreme effort to heal what he described as "this great festering sore in the life of the Highlands." He wanted the subject lifted out of the sphere of partisan controversy and the development of the resources to become something more tangible than a day-dream. Now he has received the report of the Committee he appointed under Lord Cooper and it is a unanimous one. Already the Government have accepted the conclusions of the report, and legislation to implement them will be introduced shortly after the recess. What has been a shadowy possibility for twenty years is taking shape.

Some may see in this an attempt to rush the Bill through before its effects have been fully considered; others regard it as evidence of a welcome resolution and a determination not to delay any longer a development which may mean so much for the regeneration of the Highlands. It is not the case that the public have been left in ignorance about the report. Even at a time when their space is strictly limited, all Scottish newspapers have given long and detailed summaries of the report and have commented fully on it. They have expressed unanimous approval for the development proposed. The *Inverness Courier*, which led the opposition to some earlier schemes, hailed the report as a victory for the Highlands, and expressed the hope that nothing would happen to divert the Government from its purpose.

The conclusions outlined in the report primarily affect Scotland, and Scotland has shown that it approves of them. If there are sections of the public in the South who are uninformed about the report, it would be as well if they were given a complete picture of what is proposed.

The chief recommendation of the Committee is the creation of a public service corporation to be called the North Scotland Hydro-Electric Board, responsible for initiating and undertaking the development of all further generation of electricity in the Northern area for public supply, its transmission and supply in bulk to the existing undertakers, and its distribution to consumers in the area outside the limits of existing undertakers.

Three primary objectives for the development programme of the Board are recommended: to attract to the Highlands, through the offer of cheap and abundant power, a share in the vital and expanding electro-chemical and electro-metallurgical industries; to develop such power as may be required for the consumers of existing undertakers, or for consumers in its own distribution area, the surplus being sold to the grid; and to develop on an experimental and demonstrational basis isolated schemes in isolated districts. In contrast to an impression which has been given, the Committee strongly emphasise that priority should be given to local requirements.

The Committee recommend that it should be an instruction to the new Board to co-operate as fully as possible in the pursuit of its main objectives in all schemes undertaken with official approval for the regeneration of the Highlands, so that the benefits of the new developments may be made available to the fullest possible extent in the Northern area. It is this attitude throughout the report which prompted the *Times* to compare the enterprise in its conception and spirit with the Tennessee Valley scheme.

It has been suggested that the Committee treats with scorn plans for local industry in the Highlands. If "scorn" had read "realism" the comment would have been fairer. The Committee expressly refer to the "scope for considerable development and improvement in both agriculture and fishing"—the two primary industries of the Highlands at present. They state that they have also taken into account the possibilities of establishing refrigerating plant and canning factories, and of the long-term requirements of forestry, stone quarrying and limestone crushing. And they draw the fair conclusion that "all these amount in the aggregate to a comparatively insignificant load by comparison with the power available," and add that the supplying of cheap electricity for working crofts, attracting summer visitors, and assisting light home industries would not be sufficient to turn the economic balance in the Highlands.

The Committee, therefore, look at the situation realistically. They see that small developments would neither use the power available nor would they make an effective contribution towards the revitalisation of the area. They also see that what is required is an industry which employs very large quantities of electricity and for which an abundant supply of cheap electricity is indispensable and they find that the electro-chemical and electro-metallurgical industries meet these requirements. They consider that the North of Scotland is the only possible zone in this country for developing these industries, and point our that, apart from the economic desirability of their location close to large hydro-electric sources, there would be many indirect benefits for the Highlands.

It is noticeable that the only protest about the possible effect of the enterprise on Highland scenery has come from the South. The Highlanders themselves have raised no objection on the ground of amenity. This is not to suggest that the Highlanders do not love their country; but they recognise the force of the alternative put before them by the Committee. Either the Highlands may be converted into a national park and sterilised in perpetuity, with "reservations" for the dwindling remnants of the native population, or, in exchange for a few limited and localised interferences with natural beauty, new opportunities for enterprise and industry will be opened up and there will be a future as well as a past for the Highlands.

In Miss Freda White's article there are one or two inaccuracies and inconsistencies which call for comment. It is, of course, ridiculous to speak of the report being unobtainable, or of a deliberate attempt being made to keep the public in ignorance. I am informed by the Stationery Office that large sales of the report to the public have already taken place; a second printing has been completed, and ample supplies are available. Cameron of Lochiel *was* among those who gave evidence to the Committee (his name is listed in Appendix I), and he may safely be left to speak for his clan. She speaks of the love of the Highlanders for their country (which no one questions) but does not explain why the two chief organs of Highland opinion, the *Inverness Courier* and the *Oban Times* have expressed the warmest approval for the proposals and have accepted as a safeguard the Amenity Committee to be selected by the Secretary of State to advise the Board.

When the Committee discuss in their report the several points put to them regarding amenity, Miss White sees in their replies "mutually inconsistent arguments"; but in the brief constructive passage which occurs towards the close of her article she herself demolishes her amenity argument by inferring that—under certain conditions which have nothing to do with amenity—the sacrifice of scenery she has been bemoaning would curiously become acceptable. She would like to see simple inns and cheapened transport, but does not approve of the industrial development which, with its stimulus to the improvement of all forms of communication, alone would make it possible to throw open the Highlands to all holiday-makers.

No serious opposition has yet appeared to the proposals set out by the Committee and now accepted by the Government. In the Highlands and in Scotland generally the progress of the Bill through Parliament will be watched with eager interest. There is not a Scotsman who does not feel a deep love for the wild northern part of his country; but there are few who do not think of it also in terms of emptying glens and abandoned crofts and who will not fight grimly before losing this chance of securing the future well-being of the Highlands.

GEORGE MATHERS

SIR,—I am entirely in agreement with the point of view advanced in Miss White's article on the Scottish Hydro-Electric Scheme. It is quite simply an attempt made by a nominally independent committee to cover up a re-hash of the Glen Affric Scheme. Of any indication of higher issues there is absolutely no trace at all. How any Secretary of State for Scotland, nominally at least belonging to the Labour Party, could have sponsored such a scheme is something I cannot understand.

The main assets of the Highlands are water power and scenic beauty. Any proposals which allowed a private enterprise, masquerading in this case as a public Board, to exploit the water power and interfere with the tourist industry must be resisted. The Highlands themselves should have control over the disposal of those two assets.

I can leave your correspondent to deal with the question of amenities, but the Report is weak even on the technical and economic sides. There is no indication that the committee had the advice of any expert economist or that its estimates were worked out in sufficient detail to be trustworthy. Even if one were to assume that there should be an Electrical Board for the Highlands, the main points of criticism to be levied against the findings of the Report are:—

(1) The formation of a public board of this type would only be justified if such a board had full powers to deal with electrical development in the Highlands. A careful examination of the Report indicates that it has no powers whatever. It cannot take over any supply undertaking or any industrial organisation like the British Aluminium Co.; it cannot interfere with distribution rights or distribution areas; it has no power to amalgamate undertakings, no power to call on Government assistance for financing of any schemes, and its financial position is left entirely vague.

(2) The Report deliberately goes out of its way to suggest that any kind of industrial development on a planned basis is impossible in the Highlands, and it puts up on page 21, for example, certain arguments which, through being incompletely and imperfectly described, are valueless. Even if the water power resources in the Highlands were to be devoted exclusively to electro-chemical and electro-metallurgical plants, those plants should be owned by the State, otherwise there is no public advantage in creating a non-profit making corporation if the profits that it should make are not transferred to the public but to some private firm owning the electro-metallurgical plant. This is not only exploitation; it is direct State support of exploitation.

(3) The duties of the Board, although they are not rigidly defined, are clear enough to show exactly what it cannot do. It can deal only with the further development of electricity, and not with the present production, and on its own showing this further development is going to be confined to large power schemes for industrial purposes with a surplus transmitted to the Grid or to the Central Electricity Board. There is absolutely no proposal anywhere to link up those schemes with the economic development of the areas in which they are located. It has even gone the length of suggesting that overhead transmission lines of 260,000 volts should be constructed to evacuate energy out of the area in as great a volume as possible.

(4) The new Board does not distribute electricity to the general consumer. It acts merely as a wholesaler, and yet receives for its energy, as supplied to the Central Electricity Board, not less and certainly not more than the cost of energy produced at a new steam generating station of the highest standard of efficiency. Now the cost of energy produced in the Grampian scheme was considerably in excess of that produced in a modern steam station. The necessity to supply electricity to electro-chemical plants and to the Grid at bare cost will mean that this organisation will have no money available for any kind of contribution to the welfare of the Highlands. On the contrary, the proposal is made that it should be exempt from local taxation.

The only possibility of the organisation making increased money is through the distribution of electricity to the consumer, but the Report makes it quite clear that it will not be allowed to do so. The sentence reads, "It should, however, be responsible for generation, transmission and distribution in all areas *outside* the limits of existing undertakers." The total population of the areas supplied by undertakers given in Appendix II is 669,000; the population of the area estimated on page 19 as within the effective range of supply is 660,000, so that there is apparently a deficit of 9,000. In other words, there are no outside areas in which distribution powers could be carried out, and the Board cannot exist as a distribution undertaking. A worse example of deliberate misrepresentation could not be imagined.

The total effect of the scheme will be to consolidate existing interests, and hand over the Highlands to private undertakers for complete exploitation. It is significant in this connection that the report should have regretted the failure of the Caledonian and, by inference, the Glen Affric schemes. The new Board will have no real surplus of any kind, and it may easily be an agent for prostituting the economic resources of the Highlands to interests which are not even Scottish.

If anything remotely approaching this organisation were to be created, we can say farewell to any possibility of economic revival in the Highlands of Scotland.

Campbeltonian

CHRISTIANITY

Sir,—Mr. Lionel Fielden offers us a contradiction when he says the Christian must love Quislings and saboteurs, but cannot love Winston Churchill. Probably he would be the first to agree that a Christian must love Mr. Churchill, but not what Mr. Churchill stands for. It is this dualism which has so confused Christians from time immemorial. Christianity postulates universal love, but not the tempering of one's condemnation of evil. And often this condemnation has to be made regardless of the fact that, superficially, the evil is personified in certain public figures.

One cannot help but suspect that much of the concern being felt to-day by representatives of the Christian church for the amelioration of bad social conditions is spurious. Certainly there is no reason for sanguine hopes that increased social consciousness will win men for the Church unless the Church itself first resolves its position regarding war. All talk of improving conditions is irrelevant from the point of view of the inquiring layman until Christianity speaks with one voice upon the question of the greatest act of social violence. There is much talk to-day of uniting Christendom, but the man outside the Church sees a situation in which a wide section of the Christian ministry not only condones war but identifies our cause with that of Christianity, another section approves the principles of Christian participation in this war while admitting its sub-Christian basis, and an active minority (including a few important ministers in almost every denomination) denounces not only this war but all war.

Very many people, while sceptical of Christian opposition to war, are contemptuous of the type of evangelical propaganda which seeks to convince us that the present conflict is a Holy Crusade. "Keep God out of it" is an often heard comment which is singularly apposite when one reads such statements as this, published in a North London church magazine: "It may be that before the year closes the oppressed people may hear the feet of their liberators marching towards them under the eternal sign of the Cross of Christ . . . God is already performing wonders as great as those by which He protected His chosen people in Old Testament times."

In 1930 the Lambeth Conference condemned war categorically, and until organised religion can get back unitedly to that condemnation, its social proclamations will be greeted with the suspicion they deserve.

Geoffrey Pittock-Buss

Sir,—It is impertinent of me to leap to the defence of an Archbishop and a Moderator on a matter of scriptural interpretation, but Lionel Fielden's commentary on the injunction: *Love thy neighbour as thyself* calls for a reply, so in case neither of them rise to it, here goes: He seems to assume that we are invited to love everything that our neighbour is. But surely we do not love ourselves in this indiscriminate way? There is much about myself that I cordially dislike. I often do things which I regret and for which I am prepared to accept retribution. I sometimes endeavour to restrain myself, and if I felt a sadistic frenzy rising within me I should hope that others would restrain me. On the other hand, I regard my faults with a wide tolerance and make maximum allowance for any external factors which have (or so I can easily persuade myself) conditioned them. Meanwhile, I continue to regard myself against overwhelming evidence to the contrary, as an important individual entity capable of redemption. It is in this way, I think, that we are required to love our neighbours, and so far as we are prepared to be stern with ourselves we may be stern with them. Thus, loving our neighbours as ourselves we may, within the frame-work of the Christian injunction, be pretty stiff with them at times. We may describe Quisling as: "that fox." We may say about Industrial Assurance Companies the kind of things that Christ said about the lawyers. We may even go so far as to demonstrate against black marketeers by whipping them out of their shops.

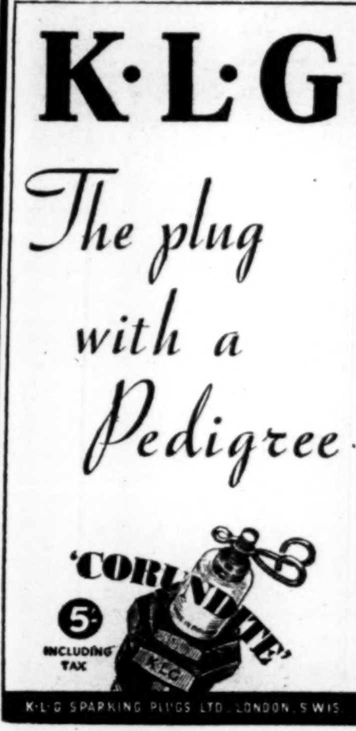
I ought perhaps to conclude this homily by confessing that in spite of what I have written I am totally incapable of loving some people in any way at all.

Mary Stocks

St. Peter's Hall,
Oxford.

BOOKSELLERS

Sir,—The charming bouquet handed by Mr. Laski to some booksellers is so well deserved that a discordant note may seem churlish. But I think the booksellers named by him would probably admit that all is not well with British bookselling. In France, Germany (before the Nazis), Holland, and the Scandinavian countries almost every large and many small towns have one, and often several, first-class well-stocked bookshops; the stock includes the native classics, nearly all the current "serious" books,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and usually an admirable selection of foreign literature; the bookseller usually has a wide knowledge of books and appears to like them and like selling them. This is not the case in Britain. My recollection is that there are more good bookshops in small capitals like Athens and Copenhagen than there are in London. In the majority of our provincial towns there are no bookshops which have a good stock of "serious" books, and my experience is that if you screw up your courage to go in and ask for one, you are more often than not made to feel that you have committed a solecism. The booksellers and shops mentioned by Mr. Laski are exceptional. Mr. Wilson is a genius who, if he had not been wise enough to take to bookselling instead of politics or war, would have been Prime Minister or Commander-in-Chief; the others are in university towns. Such shops elsewhere are oases in a desert. The excuse for this usually given is that there is no sale for good or serious books in these places. A few provincial booksellers whose names deserve to be added to Mr. Laski's list—for instance, Mr. Rayward, of Goulden and Curry, in Tunbridge Wells; Mr. Ward, of Reigate; and, among the younger generation, the admirable Miss Winterbotham, of Ward, in Brighton—have proved that this is simply not true. The question why such booksellers and shops are so rare is an important one; I suggest the rarity of good bookshops is due in part to the organisation of the publishing and bookselling trades and faulty training of booksellers.

"Bookbuyer"

BLIMP AND BEVERIDGE

Sir,—I rarely find myself in agreement with the views expressed in your leading articles. But "credit when credit is due": I must congratulate you on the remarks which you printed last week under the heading, "Blimp and Beveridge."

If the authorities wished to stir up a murmuring campaign in the ranks of the Army and to foster mistrust of the "officer class"—a class which still exists in the minds of soldiers—they could hardly have done so more effectively or more blatantly than by suppressing the A.B.C.A. pamphlet on the Beveridge Report.

There is general agreement among all the soldiers I have talked to—both officers and "other ranks"—that these A.B.C.A. discussions, though their quality and success varies from unit to unit, serve to increase mutual confidence between officers and men. Further, all seem agreed that post-war "security" is a topic which occupies the minds of a vast number of soldiers who have no strong political feeling or allegiance. There is a Communist in every unit in wait for these indifferents. To forbid discussion of the Beveridge Report in A.B.C.A. periods will drive them into his arms. Whether this is a good thing or not I will not make bold to say; but is it the result aimed at by Lord Croft and Sir James Grigg? To forbid such discussions would in itself be foolish enough; to issue the pamphlet and then withdraw it is to make certain of the maximum of its effect.

On one point you are, I think, a little unjust. You allot the blame, or much of it, to "the War Office." I know little of War Office ways, but I have a feeling that in this and in other cases they are somewhat indiscriminately blamed. It was the War Office, I am told, who started "A.B.C.A.," and that institution is, I believe, staffed and conducted within the War Office itself. "The War Office"—in so far as that conveniently compendious phrase is justified in the context—sponsored and produced the offending pamphlet. It was (if your surmise, which I have no reason to doubt, is correct) Lord Croft and Sir James Grigg who imposed the ban. To blame "Col. Blimp," the "War Office brass-hat," is a little unfair; that mythical gentleman produced the pamphlet—it was Lord Soft and Sir James Blimp, the Parliamentarians, who suppressed it.

J. Wilson

SAMUEL PALMER

Sir,—May I correct an odd statement in your review of Mr. John Piper's "British Romantic Artists"? Your reviewer wrote that "Samuel Palmer may be called the most English of romantic painters, for he is almost unique in showing no foreign influence."

Nothing Mr. Piper said supports this; and everything Palmer said and painted is against it. Blake, the elder Cozens, and Turner influenced him. But he learnt his blend of moonlight and artificial light from Elsheimer, his colour was in debt to Rubens, his particularity to Dürer, his pastoral sentiment to Claude, and his exuberant richness (walls of corn, etc.) to Breughel. Also he admitted the peculiar influence of Bonasone. If that is not enough, he said after coming back from Italy that the whole change of his style was due to Venetian colour.

It is a poor thing, especially now, to invent an exclusive nationality in a man's art. Lately we have had Sickert described several times as Danish by origin, though his father was German; and Rilke described as Czech.

Geoffrey Grigson

Chewton House,
Keynsham, Bristol.

[Mr. Grigson spoils his case by over-statement. We see no reason for admitting an affinity with Claude; and is there any evidence that Palmer ever even saw a Breughel? Sickert's father was in fact Danish by origin, and Rilke described himself as a Czech.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES

Sir,—The claim which Mr. Rance puts forward o behalf of the Roman Catholic Church is one whic will not bear investigation. It is in effect a claim th a minority of the community can demand a system o education other than that provided by the State fo the whole community; that this minority system sha be entirely under sectional control, and that the who cost shall be borne by the public purse. It is safe t say that such a claim made by a Protestant minorit in a country where the Roman Church is in th ascendancy would not be tolerated.

Mr. Rance and many other Roman Catholi protagonists are just now talking about the "doubl burden" which they suggest they are bearing. Wh are the facts? Roman Catholic education in th elementary schools is wholly paid for out of publi funds except for the use of school buildings on fiv days of the week. Against this small contribution o about 4 or 5 per cent. of the total cost there is to b placed the ownership and control of these premise out of school hours, plus the periodical re-decoratio of them at public expense—not a bad bargain, whic is shared by the Church of England schools.

It must be remembered that Roman Catholics hav perfect freedom to bring up their children in thei own way, but they have no right to look to the Stat to undertake the responsibilities either of the paren or of the church.

Quite apart from democratic theories there is a ver practical objection to the multiplication of sectiona schools with their wasteful overlapping in regard t buildings, equipment and teaching staffs. Wh should the State be called on to hold out financia inducements to maintain and extend a wastefu system?

Wilfrid J. Rowland,
Secretary

National Education Association,
32 Victoria Street,
Westminster, S.W.1

U.S.S.R.

Sir,—We receive a great number of inquirie from army units for exhibition material on U.S.S.R to display in their Information Rooms. The supplie of pictorial material (photographs and maps) ar limited, as are the units' funds. Our Exhibitio Department, however, is able to mount simple bu very popular displays from used copies of illustrated periodicals containing feature articles on U.S.S.R. May we ask your readers to forward us any such copies which they can spare? These will be prepared and forwarded to the units without charge.

Judith Todd,
Secretary, SCR

98 Gower Street,
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BOOKS IN GENERAL

A LITTLE way down Victoria Street, at the Westminster end, there is a sight grown familiar. The frontage snaps suddenly, and for a width of two or three buildings the eye takes in a ruin. Oh, another ruin! Here the skeleton has vanished; firemen have constructed a sump; we look across water at a wall with doorways and window gaps (how the water relieves such scenes!) which might have weathered years instead of months.

It's how long?—a year and a half, getting on for two years maybe—since that particular hole was knocked. Too raw at first even to look at, but the interval has brought tidiness, familiarity, a sense of fitness. We can stare. We have the right, survivors from one blitz and possible victims of the next, to criticise, to view. This bomb, then, didn't do so badly. H.E. is a great leveller of styles, and anyone with an eye walking down Victoria Street would admit that the most beguiling moment—apart from the monstrous portico of No. 50 and the little church green near St. James's Park station—is provided by the ruin of which I am speaking. It touches, it's pretty. All round, and rising six storeys high is the dingy, searing, solid opulence of the late Victorians. *That* should have shocked us, long ago, into putting the transformation of Victoria Street on our town-planning maps. What, within view of Westminster Abbey, with Queen Anne's Gate round the corner, we allowed this ugly conduit to remain! It takes a war and the barbarism of our enemy to bring home the barbarities we suffer during peace. Because none, I believe, except the myopic, would defend Victoria Street. And there are streets far worse; viler to look at, unhealthy as well as unseemly.

Quite properly, Victoria Street leads to a station from which it is possible, past a wall-pattern of roofs, to escape into the country. Escape has become so much a part of our lives that few escapists stop to consider why it is that they should have to flee from the places where they work. Why, because people buy and sell and pay and are paid in Victoria Street, should not that street be as congenial as a street in Canterbury or Arles? But it isn't. A couple of feet under the pavement there's earth; and the clerks and typists dig down to it, take trains to Surrey to enjoy the sensation of the pavement-lid lifted.

Now lift the lid in Victoria Street itself. Turn back, say, a hundred and fifty years to a time when London was still elegant among cities and instead of Victoria scrawled across the townscape the name was Anne. This particular neighbourhood was on the outskirts, with Grey Coat and Green Coat and Blue Coat schools; some almshouses; an infirmary; an artillery ground (now Artillery Mansions—look at them!); a bridewell; a pound; a vineyard; Petty France, with its garden-houses, in one of which Milton lived; small streets; long views; Westminster to the east, fields stretching west and north. Set the picture of 1780 against photographs of the present day. It is more than nostalgia, more than idle regrets for a past relegated to the print shops, that makes us want to dwell in the first.

The new architecture of that century can still be enjoyed by anyone who will walk from one end to the other of Queen Anne's Gate. Or let me quote a description from S. E. Rasmussen's *London: The Unique City* (Cape), the best general book on its subject:

> A few steps from the old Queen Anne houses in Queen Anne's Gate in Westminster is a row of large houses from about 1780, which are very good examples of the fashionable London houses of the period. Everything seems to indicate that they have not been designed by an architect. They were built by an enterprising master-mason, probably in co-operation with a carpenter. All the buildings are slightly different both in depth and breadth, but the outlines of the plans are exactly the same. This type was used as a matter of course when the building was begun, and therefore an architect was unnecessary for the planning of it. Traces of architectural work are to be found in some of the houses, but only in a fine mantelpiece, a beautiful ceiling or some other detail, which were provided by the inhabitants for the bare house just as they provided furniture, pictures and carpets. The virtues of this type of house are not to be sought in the expression of the elevation but in the brilliantly economical use of the narrow site. On the first floor the three windows of the front give light to a large room which occupies the whole breadth of the building; behind this is the large staircase with top-light leading to a drawing-room nine to ten yards deep and facing St. James's Park. This front towards the park arches out in a bay window. It seems as if the wall is distended from the inside by an expansive power of the narrow room. The staircase which ascends in the middle of the house—in a room which is also formed like a niche—is built up with beautiful marble steps, and the whole construction is so delicate and slender that one can hardly believe one's own eyes. It shows that the meagreness of the architecture has been cultivated not for the sake of economy only, but because of its intrinsic beauty—for simple as it is, this staircase, with its fine species of stone, its beautiful wrought-iron railing is sumptuous enough.
>
> These stairs, all exactly alike, form a propelling shape that ascends through the room in a fine curve as light as if the law of gravitation did not exist.
>
> The tendency of these houses, which remind us so much of modernistic experiments of our days, this modernism from about 1800, was by its contemporaries hardly recognised as a style. No books were written on it as on "real" architecture. But it was nevertheless very much alive. The whole form of the houses is an adequate expression of the taste of the period.

The interesting point here is that journeyman work at that date did—as it no longer does to-day—produce good, useful, shapely architecture. Builders and stone-masons served the taste of the time, and there was a taste to serve. To-day the builder would be working for a firm of builders, the firm would be fulfilling a contract, the contract would lead up through surveyors, Borough Councils, estate agents, architects, little men and middle-men all making a grab, to the real grabbers at the top, the speculator and the landlord. A rent-roll is fattened. A property is improved. A site is developed. Taste? Shrugs of the shoulder. From Queen Anne's Gate to Queen Anne's Mansions. With importance of site goes the new unsightliness.

* * *

One has a sort of affection for the blitz as for a gangster who blows holes in the social fabric. As it slides into the past, vanishing to a pin-point along the vista of fire-watching nights with no fires to watch, accounts of the raids in 1941–2 begin to acquire a historical glow. Already we discount largely the pity and terror, to fasten instead on scenic effects. I have read most of the books produced about the London blitz: the least readable are those which stress how the author was roused to a sense of common sacrifice and barely escaped being blown to bits; the best are bird's-eye views from an æsthetic or documentary angle. The camera, being immune to personal vanity, has done better work than the pen, and we turn to Cecil Beaton's photographs of ruins for an eerie beauty in destruction, and to the many documentary pamphlets and albums, of which the official *Front Line*, 1940–1 is the most admirable and complete. Beside these the personal accounts of writers, the letters to America and cooked-up diaries, the journalistic highspots with titles like *The Stars Don't Tell*, look shabby and rather out of date already; war gives a new lease to the idea that everyone, especially the civilian, has a good autobiography inside him, and that it only needs retirement, or a serious illness, or a bomb or two in the back garden, to bring it out. Same old ego waiting for its bit of limelight. The exception to this memoir-mongering is provided by the civilians who had something to do in the blitz besides talk and write about it. Mr. John Strachey's account of air raid wardens in Chelsea (*Post "D"*, Gollancz) gave us something new and remarkable in the way of descriptive writing, and it is noticeable that he preferred the third person and left out all the Miniver touches others put in. Ford, helping to dig for Mrs. Miller, hadn't the time to feel appropriate emotion; the result was a piece of realism of the kind proclaimed by Baudelaire in *La Charogne* as the poet's right. Such detachment from emotional prejudice, amounting almost to vision, comes at moments to everyone in wartime, but chiefly, of course, to the soldiers and civilians on the job. I have just finished reading with enjoyment an anthology by members of the National Fire Service called *Fire and Water* (Lindsay Drummond, 10s.). It has a unity and interest of its own. The contributions vary from a Spender poem ("Destruction and Resurrection—England Burning") to the adventures of a Fire Brigade Unit in Finland; most of the pieces, though, come under the head of reporting, and at their best they achieve the enhanced realism I have mentioned. Two descriptions of rescue in the elaborate, awkward, impressive prose of Henry Green; William Sansom's exact and memorable picture of a falling wall; Philip Cory's account of Helsinki; Philip Henderson's "Dockland"; and studies of station personnel by Maurice Richardson and Stephen Spender—the latter's "Christmas Day at Station XIY," by the way, being preferable, in my opinion, to the rather pretentious and clichéd poem with which the volume opens. My own pick of all these would be William Sansom's "The Wall":

> . . . But I do remember it was our third job. And there we were—Len, Lofty, Verno and myself—playing a fifty-foot jet up the face of a tall City warehouse and thinking of nothing at all. You don't think of anything after the first few hours. You just watch the white pole of water lose itself in the fire, and you think of nothing. Sometimes you move the jet over to another window. Sometimes the orange dims to black—but you only ease your grip on the ice-cold nozzle and continue pouring ceaseless gallons through the window. You know the fire will fester for hours yet. However, that night the blank, indefinite hours of waiting were sharply interrupted by an unusual sound. Very suddenly a long, rattling crack of twisting brick and mortar perforated the moment. And then the upper half of that five-storey building heaved over towards us. It hung there, poised for a timeless second before rumbling down at us. I was thinking of nothing at all, and then I was thinking of everything in the world.

The timeless second while the wall topples is held for two pages of exact thrilling detail; the men below can only think without moving; they drop the hose and crouch; one of them slowly kneels; then the red-hot bricks and mortar come crashing down, burying all of them and killing one. Fire, the eventual enemy even in war-time, is the theme also of an essay by Mr. Sansom in which he suggests that the difficulties of fire-fighting are small compared with the attempt to cage it in words. He has found his subject. *Fire and Water* brings the blitz near; but put it by and the Great Raids seem farther off than ever.

* * *

I continue my walk in Victoria Street. Those gaps made by the bombing have passed from individual tragedy into history, and they let in a little light. The raids were indiscriminate—will be so, no doubt, again; but the fortunate thing, for London as a city, is that, while one bomb in five hundred may swat a Wren church, a Nash terrace, an Adam ceiling, the other four hundred and ninety-nine will level buildings that are as well away. The sightseers (there were a lot last summer) who come up from the country to "look at the damage" have been able to enjoy, curiously enough, a London nearer to the eighteenth century than it has been for over a century. Despite terror and desolation, the new spaces retrieve views that should never have been lost. Moorfields may even become field again; St. Paul's begins to emerge; the eye, hitherto blinkered by towering alleys and sunk in steep chasms, reverts a little to its natural level. There is a certain peacefulness in these vistas of lunatic destruction.

Nature revives. Dock-leaves, groundsel ("nice if you 'ad a canary"), pretty willow-herb are spreading over rolled rubble and crumbling walls. I pause for a moment, as I do most days, by the sump in Victoria Street. With no bombardment overhead, it has found tenants. Three ducks are swimming on the water.

G. W. STONIER

NINE NEW POETS

The Iron Laurel, by SIDNEY KEYES. **Soldiers, This Solitude,** by ALAN ROOK. **The Bombed Happiness,** by J. F. HENDRY. **A Wreath for the Living,** by ALEX COMFORT. **The Van Pool,** by KEIDRICH RHYS. **The Untried Soldier,** by EMANUEL LITVINOFF. **Wounded Thammuz,** by JOHN HEATH STUBBS. **Beauty for Ashes,** by MORWENNA DONNELLY. *Routledge.* *2s. 6d. each.*

The Middle of a War. By ROY FULLER. *The New Hogarth Library.* *3s. 6d.*

Poetry (London). Edited by TAMBIMUTTU. *Grey Walls Press.* *1s. 6d.*

Anyone who reads the current miscellanies and anthologies will have seen poems above five or six of the names which head this review; now Messrs. Routledge, by introducing this series of pleasantly produced, paper-backed volumes, have given these new poets their chance of being printed and have given us the chance of estimating how they stand up to presentation in bulk.

It is commonly said that one appreciates among the moderns nothing later than the poetry one has grown up with, and this may be enough to account for the present reviewer's starting with those who owe most to the Auden-Spender generation. Roy Fuller (not in the same series but published by the Hogarth Press) is most obviously in their debt and yet comes nearest as I think to clearing a small area where his individual accent can be heard.

> Oh far
> From our desires, at every torrid port,
> Between the gem-hung velvet of the waves
> Our sires and grand-sires in their green flesh start,
> Bend skinny elbows, warn: "We have no graves.
> We passed this way, with good defended ill.
> Our virtue perished, evil is prince there still."

Sidney Keyes, too, having learnt a good deal from Spender, promises the formation of a pattern peculiar to himself.

> But earth must fall, and falling races give
> No thought to buried kings or marble lovers:
> The archaeologist must follow with
> His spade and ruler, and the fool discovers
> The future not the founder's death in tombs.

Influence, however, is not only a question of echoed accent or overheard lines; it presents as well a familiar landscape, and so in Roy Fuller, Sidney Keyes and Alan Rook one encounters recognisable features of the terrain of the Thirties, nostalgia for friends and places, a consciousness of history and claims to ancestry with the great dead.

J. F. Hendry, Alex Comfort, Keidrich Rhys and in a lesser degree Emanuel Litvinoff are on quite a different track. They owe more to Dylan Thomas and George Barker—again not only for their images and properties, though it is true that the bones and stones, the stumps, skulls and roots which Thomas's plough threw up somewhat over-litter their lines. But the relationship is more evident in their general approach. In his guide to the new movements, *Auden and After*, Francis Scarfe described the intention of the new poets as "a reaction against the objective reporting . . . against the parochial conception of 'observing' evolved by the followers of Auden and Grigson." The reaction was, presumably, in the direction of rhetoric, myth-making and incantation, and the landscape was the horrific which the surrealist surgeons opened when they made their incision deep into the present disintegration.

J. F. Hendry is the only direct representative of the self-styled Apocalyptic school which the first reaction tried, perhaps not very satisfactorily, to found. He is also, I think, the most promising of them all, with a rich, fertile flow not easy to illustrate by quotation, since the effect is felt in accumulation rather than in separate passages.

Alex Comfort is a somewhat milder version of the school, less rhetorical, more thoughtful, and with a certain descriptive gift and feel for language. Keidrich Rhys is violent in a rather mad Welsh way. His are shock tactics, the deliberate clash of the every day with the traditional where:

> Announcers and Messerschmitts exhale over our
> Welsh earth smells.

The total effect for me is of an epigrammatic cultural news reel but where the epigrams never quite come off, where the camera is always a little out of focus, where one is constantly stimulated by juxtapositions which do not, on examination, properly relate.

John Heath Stubbs and Morwenna Donnelly, he with three long artificial, literary, elegiac pastorals, she with a single very long symbolic poem, stand altogether apart from these derivations. Personally I could take neither, but those who are looking for "something different" might find it in one of these two. Finally, there is a new number of Tambimuttu's *Poetry* which for the last few years, in spite of the difficulties, has managed to keep its pages numerous and comprehensively open to both newer and less new poets.

I meant, in dividing this set of poets by derivation, not so much to assess as to indicate to others embarking on them how they might begin. And this implies that it is not easy. Emerging from a third or fourth reading of these volumes, I was left with the persistent though erroneous impression of their all being very alike. After I had successfully separated them I came to the conclusion that there is a sense in which they are united; they share a common bafflement at the immensity of the mess which they contemplate. That is not surprising, of course. They are faced, as their powers are only emerging, with a time of total transition where the disintegration of an old order looms larger than any sign of the resurgence of a new; and the war flings them out of any objective watch-tower into the centre of the disturbance. Certainly; but I wonder if they were not trying to encompass too much, to see too much and to feel too much: in face of it all Litvinoff invokes his race.

> I am no more
> A haunted country of the tragic young,
> A sea of restless lust and foundered love
> Nor am I now the victim; that has gone.
> I am the tragedy. I am Israel come out of
> captivity. . .

Hendry invokes Golgotha

> . . . Our wound is night, bridged in the frigid
> hours;
> God's manna strung upon a nail spins dawn
> In skull-tolled bell behind straw eyes, and hoods
> A set dog barking at the rat of heart.

While Sidney Keyes invokes Goethe, Stendhal and Goya as examples who held

> This stinted plot of mind with outward courage
> Against the logic of historians
> And women's quick contempt. And were not
> forgotten.

Alex Comfort seems to me to give the warning hint:

> For nobody falls but we two hear the shot—
> Noone is beaten but we see the blood,
> And the pale hand uncurl in the green water—
> Or hear the miner's spine crack two miles down.
> For those who sleep there are always apples hung,
> For the dead nothing, for the madman worlds.
> But still for the living there is too much pity
> Where every leaf covers a little bone.

"Too much pity." It is possible to become too cosmically sensitive, to feel too much at a time, to be overwhelmed by the amount there is to feel and to generalise such feelings to the point where their expression becomes too diffuse to count, too little incisive to bite home. A poet in such times might with advantage limit his area of feelings, cultivate a smaller (and more personal) plot, feel more for the particular and let the general emerge from it. As it is I get from too many of these poems the sense of strain, of straining to match the moment with devices whipped and driven to overwork.

These gropings of mine—they are nothing more—should not, however, discourage anyone from buying and reading these volumes. Messrs. Routledge's venture deserves support, and the patient reader will find a good deal to interest and to please scattered among these volumes.

T. C. WORSLEY

OURSELVES

Portrait of England. An Anthology by CHRISTIAN MAWSON. *Penguin.* *9d.*

> The worst difficulties from which we suffer do not come from without. They come from within. They . . . come from the mood of unwarrantable self-abasement into which we have been cast by a powerful section of our intellectuals. . . . Nothing can save England if she will not save herself. If we lose faith in ourselves, in our capacity to guide and to govern, if we lose our will to live, then indeed our story is told.

How far the English appetite for humble pie in the years between the wars can justly be blamed upon intellectuals may be doubtful: I do not think that Mr. Churchill (who penned the above indictment) would accuse Mr. Neville Chamberlain or Lord Halifax of undue intellectuality. And most English intellectuals wished for a prouder and more assertive foreign policy. Nevertheless it is true that they are more given to criticising their country than to praising it; and for my part I own that I cannot read without queasiness some parts of Mr. Mawson's anthology, which contains extracts from some hundred and seventy sources, all applauding the English. If this is a "portrait of England," it is a portrait showing neither wrinkles nor warts, a portrait, therefore, in the style of Van Dyck rather than of Rembrandt. The national character, one hopes, is rather more vigorous than such a picture would suggest.

Once, it is true, Mr. Mawson, perhaps intentionally, does expose an English weakness.

> We never have discussed with them [the Germans], and we never shall discuss, what is decent and clean and honourable in human behaviour. A philosopher who is interested in this question can find plenty of intellectual exercise by discussing it with the Germans. Where an Englishman, a Canadian, and an Australian are met, there is no material for such a debate.

These words are, thank goodness, not true. They come from a don (Sir Walter Raleigh) jaundiced by the "intellectual exercise" which gained him his living. English thinkers have in fact been conspicuously devoted to the discussion of ethics from Hobbes and Locke to Bentham, Leslie Stephen, Bradley, and Dr. George Moore. It is, however, a weakness of the educated Englishman to be less commonly interested than his foreign counterpart in the logic behind moral judgment. His sense of right and wrong is so emotionally potent that he dislikes any inquiry into its rational basis. And consequently he often acts badly with a good conscience, thus exposing himself to the justified if inaccurate charge of hypocrisy.

Now let me quote a few of Mr. Mawson's extracts, inviting readers to guess their origin:

> 1. A land fierce for personal freedom, and indignant with rage for justice.
>
> 2. The English are not fired with the splendid folly of making conquests, but would only prevent their neighbours from conquering. They are jealous not only of their own liberty, but even of that of other nations.
>
> 3. Things is looking about as bad as they can look, young man. You'll not have such another opportunity for showing your jolly disposition, my fine fellow, as long as you live.
>
> 4. Orchards and cornfields ring with the hum of labour; trees bend beneath the thick clusters of rich fruit which bow their branches to the ground; and the corn, piled in graceful sheaves, or waving in every light breath that sweeps above it, as if it wooed the sickle, tinges the landscape with a golden hue. A mellow softness appears to hang over the whole earth; the influence of the season seems to extend itself to the very waggon, whose slow motion across the well-reaped field is perceptible only to the eye, but strikes with no harsh sound upon the ear.
>
> 5. I belong no more to social life, which, when I quitted busy public, life, I flattered myself would be the comfort of my declining years. . . . I neither murmur nor despair; the lot of millions of my fellow-creatures is still worse than mine. . . . I am naturally of a cheerful disposition; I view things in their most comfortable light, and I unavailingly repine at nothing that cannot be retrieved.
>
> 6. Never since the heroic days of Greece has the world had such a sweet, boyish master. It will be a black day for the human race when scientific

blackguards, conspirators churls and fanatics manage to supplant him.

Only in the last of these quotations do I find some ground for uneasiness. It reminds one of the answer to the question, "Why are the English so much more successful in the Sudan than in India?"—"Because they are fond of animals and not of children." To prefer animals to children is a trait, "boyish," no doubt, but not very creditable in an adult. Even so, even despite a sentimentality in the phrasing of this quotation, it contains a measure of truth. Our mistakes in India itself are venial compared with what scientific blackguards, conspirators, churls and fanatics have effected elsewhere.

Let me now give the extract I like best in the whole book.

> In the naval fight between an English and American ship, during the war of 1812, the American vessel appeared, flags flying. A young officer on the English ship (Captain Broke, of the *Shannon*) asked if they, too, might not put up more bunting. "No," was the reply, "This has always been an unassuming ship!"

If this anecdote is characteristic of the English, so must be our disinclination for self-praise. And Mr. Mawson offers us a relevant quotation:

> And herein, as I see it, lies the strength of the English—that they have behind them this continuity of immensely varied race-experience and race-memory, running equally through all classes back to the very dawn of our dawn. This imposes on them unconsciously, even while they deny or deride it, standards of achievement, hard, perhaps, and perhaps a little unsympathetic, but not low—not low—and, as all earth is witness, not easily to be lowered. And that is the reason why in the things nearest our hearts we praise so little and criticise so lavishly. It is the only compliment which an Englishman dare pay his country.

This, I suggest, goes far towards explaining the critical attitude with which intellectuals are reproached—and the explanation comes from Rudyard Kipling. (My other extracts are by—1. H. W. Nevinson; 2. Voltaire; 3. Dickens; 4. Dickens; 5. Lord Chesterfield; 6. Santayana) When, moreover, one scrutinises Mr. Mawson's carefully chosen bouquet of compliments, certain lacunæ become painfully conspicuous. The English are good natured, zealous for freedom, honest, averse from braggadocio, and notably endowed with fortitude. We have excelled, moreover, in the arts of writing and building. But are we not, as a people, remarkably without talent for the art of living? The plaintiveness sometimes displayed by intellectuals may be connected with the pathetically low place they occupy in the esteem of their fellow countrymen; but it derives above all, I suggest, from their experience of other and more engaging societies. They remember, in France, in Italy, in Greece, not merely the spontaneous taste with which a market-stall is arranged, but the sense of human equality so amply bestowed upon the inhabitants.

These tokens of the good life are missing from modern England, nor has Mr. Mawson managed to discover them in our past. It must therefore be the intellectual's business, I maintain, to-day no less than in the time of Matthew Arnold, to diagnose the failings of his country. No Englishman who has lived here during the last two years is likely to overlook its merits.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

THE ROMAN COMMONWEALTH

The Roman Commonwealth. By R. W. MOORE. *English Universities Press.* 15s.

In 1911 A. E. Zimmern published his famous book, *The Greek Commonwealth*, which is reputed to have shaped Mr. Lloyd George's policy in the Eastern Mediterranean, and has certainly given to many their first and most enduring view of the ancient Greeks. Now, as his title implies, the Headmaster of Harrow has written a companion book on Rome. Such a task needed courage. Rome does not stir youthful imaginations as Greece does, and in recent years the exponents of Fascism, whether openly in Italy or furtively in England, have used the Roman Empire as a model, with the result that Roman history lies under a cloud. It is certainly time to put this right. The influence of Rome on the world is still so great that we ought to know what Roman life and Roman culture were. Without some knowledge of this background we cannot understand either their history or their literature.

The difficulty of writing such a book as this is that the most permanent and important achievements of Rome were not sensational. To understand them we must rid our minds of the highly coloured accounts given by Roman historians and satirists, even of the Vergilian vision of the mistress of the world, and we must turn to those products of the Roman genius which still affect our lives and our landscapes, to the law which lies at the basis of our own, to the language which still dominates the Mediterranean, to the Roman Church which has inherited the old Italian festivals, to the roads and monuments still visible from Timgad to Corbridge. It is of the men who laid these foundations that Mr. Moore writes. He tries to show what they were and how they lived. With a delightfully easy style and with much knowledge easily carried he has written an excellent book.

With the help of first-rate illustrations Mr. Moore presents the essential features of Roman life, its domesticity, its industries, its religion, its pleasures, its food. His chapter on "The Gods" is a notable success in a very difficult field; his account of the Roman home makes full use of archaeological discoveries. If his brief sketches of Roman history and literature may seem inadequate to some, that is only because they are not his main theme and have to be subordinated to it. His picture is not of events but of a people. The result is that he really succeeds in presenting a convincing and unromantic picture of the Romans. He sees them both in their virtues and in their limitations, and recognises that the men who preserved Greek civilisation and created a uniform culture for a large part of Europe made almost no contribution to science and showed in their public entertainments a curious streak of brutal vulgarity. Such paradoxes he does not attempt to explain. He is content to state the facts in their broad outline and to leave the rest to us. In the last resort the Roman character is not entirely intelligible. But the Roman achievement is there for all to see, and it is well that it should be presented in so fair-minded and so attractive a way.

C. M. BOWRA

THE PAINTERS OF POLAND

Polish Painting By HENRYK GOTLIB. *Minerva Publishing Company.* 25s.

The most interesting fact that emerges from this handsomely produced volume is that apparently there never was such a thing as Polish painting. At least so far as one can judge from the hundred and sixty odd reproductions, always Polish painters have imitated the works of foreign artists. First it was the Italian primitives and late Byzantines; then the Flemings and the French; during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Italian masters of the high renaissance, the Dutch, the Germans, the French and the late Italians were sedulously aped. Up to the end of the eighteenth century fashions

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BARCLAYS BANK

GREAT WARTIME SERVICES

The 48th Ordinary General Meeting of Barclays Bank Limited will be held in London on Jan. 22nd.

The following is an extract from the statement by the chairman, Mr. Edwin Fisher, circulated with the report and accounts for the year ended Dec. 31st, 1942:

The total of our Current, Deposit and Other Accounts has advanced to the record level of £720,976,569, compared with £645,185,397 at the close of 1941. This increase has been both actually and proportionately less than that which occurred in 1941. Our essentially liquid assets, consisting of Cash in Hand and with the Bank of England; Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in Course of Collection; Money at Call and Short Notice; Bills Discounted, and Treasury Deposit Receipts, stand at the large figure of £358,275,566, representing nearly 50 per cent. of our Current, Deposit and Other Accounts. This high ratio indicates the abnormal conditions which continue to prevail.

The Net Profit of the Bank for the year ended December 31st last, after payment of all charges and after making provision for all Bad and Doubtful Debts and for Contingencies, amounted to £1,529,743, which compares with the figure of £1,353,302 for the year 1941. The Directors recommend the payment of Final Dividends of 5 per cent., making 10 per cent. for the year, on the "A" Stock, and 7 per cent., making 14 per cent. for the year, on the "B" Stock and "C" Stock, less Income Tax.

NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

There are indications at times that the part played by the Banks in the National effort and the services afforded by them to the community do not always receive the recognition they deserve. The extent of the Banks' participation in financing the Government is well known, but it is not out of place to draw attention to the manner in which they have met the changing needs of the Nation and have sustained the spirit of service through all the vicissitudes arising out of the war.

In some directions the work of the Banks has decreased on account of war conditions. There has been the shrinkage in the volume of loans and the decline in Foreign and Stock Exchange business. In other directions, however, the work has expanded. There have been the problems of redistribution entailed by transfers of population and businesses, while, speaking for ourselves, the rise in Bank deposits has been accompanied by a growth in the number of Current Accounts, which has maintained an almost continuous increase month by month—a good index of the growing appreciation of the facilities which the Bank has to offer and welcome evidence of the extension of the banking habit.

The Banks have shouldered new duties and responsibilities. Much detail work has been brought about by Government regulations, while the banking arrangements made available to His Majesty's Forces, the Allied Forces and also to Government Departments have been considerable. In June last, the extra duty of handling clothing coupons on behalf of the Board of Trade was readily undertaken.

MAINTENANCE OF STABILITY

We have released 5,939 of our pre-war Staff to His Majesty's Forces or for other full-time National Service and it is perhaps worth observing that 531 of our Branches have been closed. We are taking further steps to meet the wish of the Kennet Committee that the process of concentration shall continue.

The greatest service of all, however—apt to be forgotten perhaps because it is taken for granted—is the maintenance of stability in the British banking system in war and in peace, in good times and in bad. The untold benefit to the public of sound banking can better be realised when we consider that the British experience has been by no means common to all countries. The Banks here have probably been able to act with greater freedom from legislative restraint and control than has been the case elsewhere. They have therefore retained liberty of judgment and initiative and, consequently, a ready adaptability which, coupled with their steadfast policy of keeping well in mind their duty to the public, is the genesis of their success.

for Cracow and Warsaw seem generally to have been provided by itinerant professionals seeking a living in some society less critical than that in which they were bred; but in the nineteenth Polish painters took to studying abroad. They studied in Rome, in Munich and, above all, in Paris. It is these foreign expeditions which seem to have produced the least disheartening results. To be sure, Alexander Orlowski—to my mind the most attractive artist here represented—learnt his trade at home; but he learnt it from a Frenchman, and when he was five-and-twenty went to Petersburgh and never came back. Excepting him, Michalowski, who follows Delacroix, and Rodakowski (by whom we are shown two respectable portraits of women and a ludicrous effigy of Dembinski, and who seems to have relied on Courbet and the Realists) alone held my attention as I worked my way through the photographs.

It is to the credit of author and publishers that they have set their faces against coloured plates. Here is nothing but honest black and white. Yet, seeing that Mr. Gotlib claims as the most admirable quality of Polish painting its colour, the painters, I suppose, might claim that they were being shown at a disadvantage. Few who have visited conscientiously Paris exhibitions during the last thirty years would agree with them. In the rather monotonous output of the twentieth-century *Ecole de Paris* what distinguished the Polish contribution was a particularly strident emphasis on garish discords or obvious harmonies; and it is to the work of these contemporaries that the greater part of the book is devoted. The abundance is surprising, and slightly disquieting. Still more surprising is the fact that, in this plethora, no place has been found for Kisling or Marcoussis, mediocre artists, maybe, but about the best of the bunch.

Mr. Wilenski, who provides a preface, suggests that the truly national art of Poland is to be found, not in pictures, but in the "popular arts"—in prints, pots, textiles, painted carts or carved broomsticks. To make room for a few of these gladly one would have spared some samples of the staple commodity of *le Salon d'automne* and *les Indépendants*. For the rest, he declines "either to challenge or endorse" the author's theory that Polish painting distinguishes itself from its Western models by a Byzantine tang. All I can say is that, so far as these reproductions go, the only one conspicuously more "byzantine" than the ordinary pre-Giottesque or early fourteenth-century painting is the Madonna of Czestochowa, which seems to have been painted by an Italian and repainted by an illuminator from Mistra. The dozen primitives we are shown are not specifically Polish or Byzantine or anything else, except provincial, and are certainly no better than the ordinary mediæval paintings to be found in English churches.

Mr. Gotlib does his best. He has realised that the job of "writing up" Polish painting is a tough one; and he has tried to be modest, or at any rate moderate, in his encomia. Only now and then does he let slip some absurdity such as—"his (Kotsis's) silver-greys and rare pale greens inevitably recall the works of Vermeer of Delft" or this strange *obiter dictum*—"and when he left Watteau, it was for Rembrandt and the Dutch, the real sources of Watteau's art." CLIVE BELL

Sword of Bone. By ANTONY RHODES. *Faber.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Rhodes's novel is best judged as autobiography, and his invention is his weakest quality. *Sword of Bone* is partly a factual description of the author's experiences in France up to Dunkirk, partly a factious pastiche of life in the British Expeditionary Force. In the first mood he is nearly always interesting, in the second nearly always depressing. As an engineer officer he has a lot to tell about the belated continuation of the Maginot Line along the Belgian frontier; he has a lot to tell, too, about the genuine efficiency of the Maginot Line proper. In this and in many other things he is an intelligent and expert reporter. As a humorous philosopher he is les successful. Sometimes his comments are funny but more often whimsical or facetious. And hi admiration for culture is such that he drags int the first fifty pages the names of Renoir, Rousseau Herrick, Chopin, Anatole France, Greco Beethoven, Neance, Dickens, Socrates, Charlott Brontë, Botticelli, Wilde, Corot, Sappho and Dumas. These culture-decorations always wea uneasily.

Week-end Competitions

No. 676

Set by Fred Oyster.

THE NEW STATESMAN & NATION recently pub lished a column of aphorisms on the Englis character written by a Belgian living in London Do we see ourselves as others see us? Competitor are invited to submit their own set of six aphorism on our national character.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the numbe of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Grea Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, January 25th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserve the right to print in part or as a whole any matte sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 673

Set by Roger Marvell

Competitors are invited to compose clerihews on the names of foreign towns or villages. Any number may be sent in, and prizes are offered for the best pair.

Report by Roger Marvell

Dizzy with reading over five hundred clerihews, I hope that the selection I have made will be thought up to standard. G. H. L. has tried, successfully I think, to put the clerihew form to serious use, and for his enterprise he deserves a first prize of a guinea. (He has provided, moreover, a third example that will interest all our Burmese readers.) Guy Williams's verses are too good not to print, but they are not clerihews and do not qualify for a prize. Half a guinea goes to each of the other competitors by whom two clerihews are printed below. I wish I could reproduce the drawings sent to illustrate his verses by an entrant in the R.A.F.

A GARLAND OF BURMA CITIES

Old Prome—a wall, a moat,
Lotus afloat,
Rice-fields with stubble on,
Tamarind and myrobalan.

Harvest time in old Pegu!
Plain bronzed, and cattle blue;
Black-yellow krait
Coiled in a red square well of laterite.

Wâgaru, smîng taw,
Dôndami, ré, kyaik maraw,
Kawhnat, dágung, bilum, pa-án,
Kamama, Martaban.

(G. H. L.)

For possessing a name
That symbolises shame,
Munich,
Among towns, is unique.

Boswell's private Odyssey
(Although not goddessy)
Must have included at least one Nausicaa
Left in Corsica. (G. DE VAVASOUR)

I offered no bouquet
To Le Touquet.
I could never afford
To be so expensively bored.

Waterloo
May be a village to you.
But to most of the nation
It's merely a station. (HARDY AMIES)

If Kalgoorlie
Makes you feel poorly
It would be foolhardy
To live at Coolgardie.

"Bug Bug? What a name!"
Said the Tommy who came
From a two-roomed flat
In Medicine Hat. (E. V. MILNER)

At Rapallo
They fry sprats in tallow;
But you'll find the Customs far sillier
At Ventimiglia.

People in Gürlitz
Have never heard of Herr Berlitz,
So that our 9
Is merely a negative sign. (WILLY TADPOLE)

The fall of Singapore
Is rather a bore.
So many of one's closest relations
Depend upon rubber plantations.

People from Wisconsin
Are not keen on sin.
But the morals of Monte Carlo
Are low. (NESBERG)

Versailles
Worries the eye;
Glass, gilt and lakes
Till the head aches.

Those who toured
Lourdes
Couldn't have enjoyed themselves more
In a multiple store. (CONSTANCE SEWELL)

Oh, Grindelwald! 'mid sportive Alps,
With glaciers as glatt as spiegels,
How can we risk our English scalps
By dubbing you "The Swiss 'Gleneagles'"?

Lucerne! Lucerne! By waters blue
"Dispense your open-handed charms!"
Men come from far and near to view
Your avenue of widespread palms.
(GUY WILLIAMS)

Our spy in Jibuti
Is no beauty;
But she hears all the jabber
In Addis Ababa. (P. C. IRWIN)

When Pat O'Flaherty came to London
He left behind him all the girls he had undone;
And his Fenian mother in Cahireen
Actually said, "God save the Queen!"
(YORICK)

Sirte
Is rather dirte;
So is Tamet,
Damet! (OLRIC)

Le Touquet
Is something like Stiffkey;
Only rather higher caste,
And not quite so fast. (IGNOTUS)

Buna
Is not the same as Poona.
Buna is war news;
Poona is bore news. (ALLAN M. LAING)

The people of Tiflis
Suffer seriously from measles;
Whereas in Eritrea
The trouble is merely rheumatism. (MIMIC)

The Serbs call it
Split;
But I prefer it legato
—Spalato. (E. G. C.)

Singapore . . . ?
No more . . . ?
What a bore! . . .
Fore! (J. H. BROOKS)

You is in Japan
(Figure that out if you can);
But the Americans know it's there——
So *You*'d better beware. (J. P. C.)

In Nancy
I was nobody's fancy;
But I was a regular guy
In Puy. (H. S. F.)

Salonica
Is not the place's proper monniker;
It's far Greeker
To call it Salonica. (D. K. B.)

Empire builders would abhor
Communists at Singapore;
Though they may not be so bad
In Stalingrad. (OLIVE M. STONE)

Spa
Has really decayed too far;
It's ceased to be haut-monde or even demi-
And, damn it, you can scarcely make up a table
of "chemmy."
(PETER CHAMBERLAIN)

There's no krieg
At Brieg;
What bliss
To be Swiss! (V. B. and A. W. B.)

Messrs. Gillow and Waring
Might do a lot of repairing;
But I shouldn't care to see Naples
Entirely re-decorated by Maple's.
(JAN BRITTON)

The importance of Boston
Is quite lost on
Those to whom it just means
Beans. (LESLIE JOHNSON)

Cairo
To any tyro
Means the riddle of the ages
And wishful Majors. (D. W. BARKER)

Vienna. So gay!
Your music unheard is sweet;
Though gone are the light dancing feet—
On marches, through arches, away,
(L. MARSHALL JONES)

The Archduke who lives in a 'cello
In the village of Tsarskoë Selo
Was called oedipoid
By Freud. (O'CONOR BRIEN)

Everyone knows that Doorn
Is not where the Fuehrer was Born;
But what a Surprise
If it's there that he Dies. (T. J. HUNT)

Munich
Boasts of a faith that is Punic;
And of a feral
Beer-hall. (PIBWOB)

Nijni Novgorod
Rhymed with God;
So though it remained the same
They gave it another name.
(SIR ROBERT WITT)

Sur le pont
D'Avignon
Quand on voit le Boche on
Crache, et murmure "Cochon!"
(I. C. SAUL)

Bâle
Has an enormous Wartesaal,
Where one sits indefinitely on red plush
In a dead hush. MISS R. MAXWELL)

In the Twenties, Berlin
Was a hotbed of sin;
If you lay with a skirt you
Were a model of virtue. (P. C. ROSCOE)

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Statement of Accounts
31st December, 1942

LIABILITIES

	£	£ (*to the nearest* £)
Current, Deposit and other Accounts, including Reserve for Taxation and Contingencies and Balance of Profit and Loss	709,226,301	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	11,750,268	
		720,976,569
Acceptances and Endorsements, etc., for account of Customers		14,864,781
Paid-up Capital		15,858,217
Reserve Fund		11,250,000

ASSETS

	£	£
Cash in Hand and with the Bank of England		75,428,594
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection		33,099,751
Money at Call and Short Notice		19,984,800
Bills Discounted		38,262,421
Treasury Deposit Receipts		191,500,000
Investments		206,459,854
Investments in Subsidiary Banks (at cost, *less* amounts written off):—		
The British Linen Bank—**£1,241,044 12s. 6d.** Stock		3,723,134
Other Banks—(including fully paid Stock and **500,000** "B" Shares of **£5** each, **£1** per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and **1,000,000** Shares of **£1** each, **5s.** per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France) Limited)		2,496,615
Advances:—Customers and other Accounts	168,066,328	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	1,146,991	
		169,213,319
Liability of Customers for Acceptances and Endorsements, etc.		14,864,781
Bank Premises and Adjoining Properties (at cost, *less* amounts written off)		7,916,299

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